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1901

THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
EFFECTS OF RELIGION  
ON  
MANKIND;  
IN COUNTRIES ANCIENT AND MODERN,  
BARBAROUS AND CIVILIZED.

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Edition Second.

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Ch. I. The Expediency of true Religion in civilized States, with the principal Effects of the Heathen Religion.

Ch. II. The general Tendency and Effects of the Jewish Religion.

Ch. III. General Tendency and particular Effects of Christianity on the Manners and Laws of many Nations.

Ch. IV. The Origin, Progress and Effects of Mahometanism.

Ch. V. Examination of a few Points relative to the Tendency and Effects of the Heathen, Jewish and Christian Religions.

Ch. VI. A Refutation of various Objections and Insinuations against the Expediency of Religion.

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BY

THE REV. EDWARD RYAN, D.D.

VICAR OF DONOGHMORE.

---

"MAN", says Voltaire, "has always stood in need of a curb; and  
"wherever there is a fixed community Religion is necessary: the Laws  
"are a restraint on open crimes and Religion on those that are private."

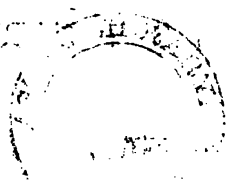
*Treatise on Toleration.*

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1802.



1486

TO  
THE MOST REVEREND  
CHARLES AGAR, D.D.

LORD SOMERTON,  
ARCH-BISHOP OF DUBLIN,  
PRIMATE OF IRELAND,

*&c. &c.*

THIS HISTORY

IS

MOST HUMBL Y

INSCRIBED

BY

*HIS GRACE,*

MOST DUTIFUL

AND

MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

*The Author.*



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to

## THE READER.

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**T**HIS Publication is intended to remove an objection to the Divine Origin of the Gospel, to promote Christian Morality and to serve the Sick Poor of the Author's Parish in Dublin. This work which he is publishing by subscription for their benefit cleared 200l. : with which sum he purchased two debentures that will produce a permanent Fund of 10l. a year. Near 250l. which another work of his produced in 1795 were devoted then as the 10l. a year will be in future to the poor, without regard to religious distinctions. Whether the work is likely to serve the cause of Religion and Virtue the judicious Reader will determine.

This history is not intended to magnify the errors or vices of sects ; but to render Christianity amiable by a display of its advantages, and to strike shame into the unbeliever

believer who reviles or derides so useful an institution. The Author hopes his exertions have been more usefully employed against the enemies of the Gospel in general, than if they had been directed against sectaries who, while they err in some points, admit the fundamental articles of our religion.

To the usual arguments for the Divine Authority of the Gospel, this history adds one which requires no extent of learning, nor any other than common powers of mind to comprehend it; namely, that *Christianity has actually operated for the benefit of mankind and as might be expected from a religion professing to be divine.*

Bayle, Shaftsbury, Voltaire, Rousseau, Gibbon and other infidel writers have endeavoured to prove religion injurious or useless—a source of persecutions and troubles, of enthusiasm and superstition. Could such a charge be made good the direct evidences of Christianity would have little weight; for were they as strong as mathematical demonstrations they must still be insufficient to prove that God was the Author of a religion which has actually been injurious or even useless to his creatures.

The author of the following pages ascribes to Christianity the good deeds of its teachers, of religious princes and of its professors in general; where those deeds were the natural fruits of its letter or spirit. A history of the effects of Christianity is necessarily confined to its proper fruits; and it is as necessarily  
silent

silent on the pride, avarice, ambition, dissoluteness and other vices of its professors. A detail of those vices, and of the mischiefs done by *nominal* Christians, would in fact be a history of the bad effects of irreligion, and when placed in their proper light might serve to annoy the infidel almost as effectually as a display of the benefits which have resulted from the Gospel. We challenge the ablest champions of Deism to name a single vice, or a single evil voluntarily inflicted by one man or one nation upon another, which can be fairly proved an offspring of the Christian system, or which did not obviously arise from ignorance of the Gospel, from perversions of it, from corruptions of it, or from a direct violation of its precepts.

With regard to this history in general, it may be observed that the instances which it exhibits of chastity, humility, benevolence, forgiveness, &c. &c. are fitted to produce a more direct as well as more satisfactory conviction of the Christian verity in plain minds, than could be effected by the best-conceived theoretic reasoning; while to understandings of a higher character conclusions already formed will receive from such a detail the most valuable corroboration. In a practical view also it is hoped its tendency will not be unimportant. Interesting facts are both more powerfully felt and will be longer retained than dry arguments—and besides, while the preacher urges virtue on the *authority of Scripture*, the exemplifications here adduced

adduced of the happy influence of Christianity on individuals, families and communities will give to that authority all the additional strength which it is possible for it to receive.

It may not be improper to advert to a circumstance which it is scarcely possible to pass over without some degree of notice. The author of the article on RELIGION in the Scotch Encyclopedia has thought proper to condemn M. Neckar for omitting, in his work on the *Importance of Religious Opinions*, "to review the history of past ages, in order to discover how far religious opinions have actually been injurious or beneficial to society"—observing at the same time, that appeals to fact furnish much stronger arguments against the sceptic than the dry speculations employed by M. Neckar. How far these animadversions apply to that writer's very elegant work it is not my province to determine: but I presume it might be stated with truth that to search for the necessary facts through the numerous volumes of civil and ecclesiastical history, and then to select and arrange them in such order and method as the object would require, was a work of too much labour to be expected from a man engaged in so many other businesses—and it does not appear that there was any such compilation ready formed to his hand. The Encyclopedist however seems to speak as if he himself had the merit of supplying this defect. I should be sorry to rob him of his due; yet I cannot but observe, that if similarity

larity of arrangement, coincidence of matter both as to insertion and omission—identical words and sometimes whole sentences—be proofs of one author having consulted another, then have I reason to conclude that the British Encyclopedist whose work appeared in 1795 was not unacquainted with the first volume of my work which had been published seven years before. If this be so, with what shadow of consistency does he censure M. Neckar, and yet give no hint of his own obligations to the labour of another?

The chief improvements of this second Edition consist in the omission of certain parts of the first, and the substitution of more pertinent matter which the author had not met with when the first was published. Most of the additions occur in the third chapter and comprize these particulars: The Gospel and its teachers rendered its first converts less illiberal than their Heathen or Jewish ancestors—it restrained the vices and violences of princes—improved the condition of females—checked the sale of men—abated the rigours of servitude—protected widows and orphans against injustice—orphan princes against usurpers—monarchs against rebellious subjects—subjects against oppression and exaction—the weak against the powerful in suits at law—and the shipwrecked against plunderers;—it abated the violence of war between different nations and among fellow-subjects—reconciled differences among neighbours—discouraged duels, jousts and tourna-

tournaments—and produced happy effects on the Arabs—Ethiopians—Persians—Armenians—Spaniards—Bessi—Alamanni—Hessians—Bulgarians—Moravians—Russians—Prussians—Livonians, and other nations. My first Edition and the article Religion in the Encyclopedia are silent on those happy effects.

*E. Ryan.*

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CHAP. I.

THE EXPEDIENCY OF TRUE RELIGION IN CIVILIZED STATES, WITH THE PRINCIPAL EFFECTS OF THE HEATHEN RELIGION.

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## CHAP. I.

The expediency and defects of human laws.

**I**T is universally allowed that human laws were instituted to prevent injustice, to protect the weak, to restrain the turbulent, to encourage virtue, and to promote the peace and interest of society. If human laws do not uniformly produce these salutary effects, the original intention of entering into society is so far frustrated as those laws are defective. But the following considerations evince, that laws are not productive of all the advantages which they were intended to produce. Being the compositions of weak, ignorant or prejudiced men, they are not always just; and when just, cannot provide against all disorders in political constitutions. They are frequently obscure, equivocal and liable to misinterpretation; and the plainest and most simple are often wrested from their obvious meaning and intention. Political laws, ever attentive to the external actions of men, forbid only such enormities as are evidently pernicious to society, and plainly destructive of human happiness. They take no cognizance of trifling errors, which sometimes lead to or terminate in serious mischiefs; do not prohibit ingratitude, detraction and breaches of promise, nor repress pride, avarice, ambition, malice and revenge, which are adverse to the peace and welfare of society. There are several virtues which the civil magistrate could not enforce by penal laws, without considerable inconvenience. Were men constrained to hospitality, liberality, beneficence, truth, gratitude, sincerity and other duties, it must destroy the merit of virtues, the free exercise of which constitutes no small part of great and amiable characters. Human laws do not

not compel men to the practice of those virtues; CHAP. I.  
a man may omit them with impunity, tho' they contribute to the happiness and ornament of society. Civil institutions cannot restrain such irregularities as result from our natural appetites; and are so far from effecting this desirable end, that they rather inflame than control the passions. In a state of nature, men's wants are few and their appetites moderate; while improved civil society creates artificial wants, and numberless contests arise from luxury and avarice. Upon the whole it is evident that human laws are not always just, universal and determinate; do not restrain intemperance, regulate the thoughts, meliorate the heart, nor promote the general practice of virtue.

The insufficiency of human laws will more fully appear by a consideration of rewards and punishments, which have been thought necessary to enforce the observance of them. Human functions imperfect. As to rewards, they could not be established in any nation; because, "were the exercise of every "virtue to be enforced by the proposal of particular rewards, it would be impossible for "any state to furnish stock for so profuse a "bounty (b)". The payment of such rewards by taxes would be impossible; no government being able to bribe every member to an observance of its laws. The following observations evince, that human laws must be imperfect in respect to punishments. The civil magistrate being unable in all cases clearly to prove the crime against an offender; the latter evades the law and escapes its penalties. Should he be found guilty, he hopes for impu-

(b) Blackstone's Comment. Introd. Sect. 11. 1.

## CHAP. I.

nity from his own cunning, or from the lenity or corruption of the judge; and should he be punished, the penalty is not always proportioned to the offence. If then rewards and punishments are the supports of human laws, as they are allowed to be; and if civil institutions are in numberless instances destitute of those supports; it is evident that without some other prop, the fabric of human laws must in some degree be unsupported, and so far fail of the end they propose.

True religion tends to remedy those imperfections.

It is generally acknowledged, that a lively sense of the divine attributes is the best expedient for enforcing morality, and remedying defects in the laws of every country. The most important human laws are founded on natural, and denounce civil penalties on crimes already prohibited by the laws of nature or of God. Hence tho' a criminal should escape here the punishment due to his offences; yet if acquainted with true religion, it will inform him, he cannot escape the all-seeing eye of the Supreme Being, whose justice requires the punishment of offenders. By true religion is understood a sense of the being and attributes of God, discovered by tradition from the patriarchs, by revelation, by reason, or by all of them together. Refined ideas of God have been derived, with some probability, from ancient tradition; with certainty, from the mosaic, prophetic and evangelical writings; and obscurely, if at all, from the deductions of reason. It might be expected, in point of order, that we should begin with exhibiting the effects of the patriarchal religion, and of that system of superstition which prevailed in the world before the promulgation of the mosaic law: But as history is not sufficiently clear on either

either of these points; we are obliged to confine ourselves to the effects of true and false religion subsequent to that period. We shall see in the course of this work, what effect true religion is calculated to produce; and how it remedies the imperfections of civil establishments. CHAP. I.

Most of the evils experienced by mankind have originated from avarice, ambition, luxury, cruelty or oppression. True religion, by restraining these vices, tends to prevent human misery, and to promote the happiness of individuals and communities. The avarice of private persons renders them wretched in themselves and contemptible to others; while this vice drives princes to such exaction as generally causes the misery of multitudes. Ambition prompts kings to sacrifice the lives of their subjects; luxury leads to poverty and venality; and rebellion or servitude is the effect of oppression. Good princes, who had a confidence in their subjects, have lived happily and securely; whereas wicked kings were banished, or lived in a constant dread of being murdered or deposed. A learned writer (c) maintains that the temporal happiness of individuals and states was advanced by an attention to religion and virtue; and that irreligion and immorality have been ruinous to communities. This author has divided the history of the Ninevites, Babylonians, Egyptians, Tyrians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, Germans and other nations, into different periods; and maintains that each of them was most prosperous, when they deviated least from religion and virtue.

(c) Bozjus de ruinis gentium & regnorum adversus impios politicos.



## CHAP. I.

Its tendency in respect to judges and witnesses, princes and subjects.

Religion is a powerful preventive of corruption in judges; and oaths are the most effectual means of discovering the truth, in matters relating to life and property. The validity of oaths is founded on a sense of the omnipresence and justice of God; and the expediency of those solemn appeals will appear, by considering their influence upon judges and witnesses, upon sovereigns and their subjects. Human laws being often ambiguous, sometimes obscure, and never universal; the decision must depend much on the integrity of the judge whose duty and oath require him to supply deficiencies, and elucidate obscurities by a fair and simple interpretation, by an impartial application of laws to particular cases, and by attending to the original intention and spirit of the legislator. The veracity of witnesses cited in courts of justice also depends on their minds being impressed with sentiments of religion. The more disinterested men are, the more weighty their testimony; and none surely are more disinterested than the truly religious, who consider a present unjust advantage as trifling and mean, when compared to that which is future and eternal. Nor is religion less useful to princes and their subjects: for what can add more weight to a supreme magistrate, than a full assurance of his piety and impartiality in dispensing justice, and enforcing the laws? Besides, the faithful execution of laws depends in some measure upon the sacred oath whereby the prince is bound to administer them with equity, and to act according to the trust reposed in him by his people. A ruler might, perhaps, by the dread of his power, compel his subjects to an observance of his laws; but without a conscientious concurrence  
of

of the will, no sincere obedience is to be expected. The religious principle attaches soldiers to their commanders, renders sovereigns mild and just in their administration, and subjects loyal and obedient to their prince. CHAP. I.  
 “ Such is the force which religion hath to  
 “ qualify all sorts of men, and to render them  
 “ in public affairs the more serviceable ; go-  
 “ vernors, apt to rule with conscience ; infe-  
 “ riors, for conscience sake the more willing  
 “ to obey.” This is the testimony of the ju-  
 dicious Hooker (*d*) ; nor is that of the learn-  
 ed Montesquieu (*e*) less strong to our purpo’e,  
 “ A prince who loves and fears religion, says  
 “ he, is as a lion who stoops to the hand that  
 “ strokes, or to the voice that appeases him :  
 “ he who fears and hates religion, is like the  
 “ wild beast that growls and bites the chain  
 “ which prevents his flying on the passenger :  
 “ he who has no religion, is that terrible ani-  
 “ mal who perceives his liberty, only when  
 “ he tears to pieces and devours.” Since  
 then religion produces such excellent effects,  
 where the conduct of both prince and people  
 is directed by known laws ; how much more  
 useful must it be in despotic governments,  
 where the sovereign is absolute, and where the  
 people have no security from oppression but in  
 the humanity of the prince ? What can so  
 soften the despot, as a strong sense of a Being to  
 whom he must account for his actions, and who  
 will reward or punish him according to his  
 works ? It will appear in the third Chapter of  
 this history, that Christianity actually restrain-  
 ed despotism and oppression in different parts  
 of Christendom.

(*d*) Hooker. Eccl. Pol. Book v. Sect 1.

(*e*) L’Esprit des Loix, liv. xxiv. ch. 2.

## CHAP. I.

Source of  
true re-  
ligion a-  
mong the  
ancients.

Some ancient nations and ancient philosophers entertained exalted ideas of the attributes of God. Noah, having been one hundred years old at the deluge, and acquainted with the religion, morality, agriculture, and arts of the antediluvian world, was well qualified to instruct his family and descendants in the knowledge and practice of them. It is natural to suppose the second father of mankind impressed a strong sense of the attributes of God, and the necessity of a moral conduct, on the minds of his children. His escape from the general destruction must have made him contemplate the goodness and forbearance of God with pleasure and gratitude; and his power, wisdom and justice, with awe, admiration and a dread of offending. He must have told his family, that the antediluvian world were incorrigibly wicked, and destroyed, not only for their crimes but for an example to posterity. Hence his disciples must have been instructed in religious and moral precepts, and have conveyed each of them the same instruction to his children and descendants. Tradition, no doubt, was the source from which the nations and sages of antiquity drew rational ideas of the being and attributes of God. It appears from Eusebius (*f*) that several ancient nations had nearly the same ideas of a Supreme Being; nor is this improbable; since all sprung from the same origin, and the Noachian traditions must have continued uncorrupted in all nations for some time after the deluge. The Medes and Persians, who are supposed to be the offspring of Shem, Noah's Son, probably retained their ancient patriarchal religion and customs

(f) Prep. Evang. Lib. I.

without material alteration, for a considerable time. Hence the Persians believed the Supreme Being was eternal, uncreated, incorruptible, incorporeal, and uncompounded, the greatest and best of beings, the creator of soul and body, of light and darkness, and prior to all things (*g*). Their Sadder (*b*), or sacred book, though blended with false opinions, abounds with excellent moral precepts; and requires men to begin the day with prayer, praise, and thanksgivings unto God; to be chaste in their bodies, honest in their dealings, and to shun pleasure, pride, robbery and revenge. The ancient Indians also entertained sublime ideas of the Supreme Being. They maintained that the governor of the world pervades it as a soul; that he is immortal and bountiful, and knoweth, ruleth and preserveth all things; that the human soul is a particle of the divinity, survives the body, and returns to God to be rewarded or punished (*i*). It appears from the Vedam (*k*) or sacred book of the Indians, that they believed in a Supreme Being, who is simple, invisible, immutable, eternal, wise, holy, true, good and merciful. The primitive Chinese had refined ideas of God; and worshipped him under the appellation of Shangti or Tyen. They considered him as eternal and always active, the sovereign emperor, intelligent, incomprehensible, omnipotent, the self-existent unity, which produced all things by his power, just, good and merciful, who rewards or punishes either here or hereafter, whose

(*g*) Ib. Cap. vii. and Hyde Hist. Relig. vet. Persarum,

(*h*) Hyde prope finem,

(*i*) Bruckeri Hist. Critica, Lib. ii. cap. 4, vol. 1

(*k*) See Ramsay.

CHAP. I. justice is love, and whose punishments are mercies (1). However, the sublime ideas which were entertained of God by those ancient nations, were in process of time blended with false and unworthy opinions. History does not accurately inform us, how true religion became corrupted; but acquaints us with many of the corruptions, and with the effects of them. Even the corruptions were useful in the hands of wise men, but in process of time produced direful effects on the morals of the people. The history of those corruptions, evinces the excellence of that religion which is adapted to prevent or remove them. The knowledge of true religion tends to abolish false opinions, and the various inconveniencies which flow from them to individuals and communities. Did men know and practise its precepts, those inconveniencies would have been removed; and many of them actually were abolished by the Jewish and Christian revelations. Men always did, and ever will entertain some idea of a Supreme Being; but the human mind, where it has not been properly directed, has generally attached itself to unworthy objects, the worship of which has been detrimental to society. The crimes perpetrated in conformity to the prejudices of the Gentiles, furnish an argument in support of that religion which tends to remove those prejudices. The bad effects resulting from false religion or from corruptions of the true, point out to rulers, how much it is their duty to direct the minds of their subjects to the proper object of worship, in order to obtain the advantages which flow from true religion, or to prevent the inconveniencies which have

(1) See Ramsay's Philosophical principles, vol. II, ch. 3.  
asilem

arisen from the false. If the land be not sowed with good seed, it will be overgrown with noxious weeds; superstition or enthusiasm will occupy the place of true religion, and be instrumental in promoting the schemes of the wicked and designing. In treating on Gentilism, we shall not trouble our readers with the fables and genealogies of the Heathen Gods and Goddesses which are known to every school-boy; but shall make such observations on the popular religion of the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, &c. as may enable men to perceive its tendency and effects.

CHAP. I.

The history of all ancient nations assures us, that religion was not originally devised to serve the purposes of government. The inhabitants of every ancient kingdom entertained religious opinions prior to the establishment of civil politics; nor could founders of states or wise lawgivers, if left to themselves, have ever relished the gross superstitions, which they established among the Heathens. But, having found the people superstitious they complied with their prejudices, and directed their superstitions so as to advance their own political designs. Aided by false religion, they enforced the practice of particular virtues, softened the manners of a rugged people, or used it as an instrument in extending their conquests. That false religion was cultivated in different nations for political purposes, appears from hence, that the chief men in almost every state assumed the direction of all matters relative to their superstitions. Amphiloehus and Mopsus were kings of the Argives and also Augurs (*m*); and the Spartan princes

Good effects of heathenism in the hands of wise men.

(*m*) Cicero de Divin. Lib. 1. Cap. 40. 41.

**CHAP. I.** on their accession to the throne were obliged to assume the sacerdotal function. Anius was a temporal prince and also a priest of Apollo (*n*); and Priam had his son Helenus and his daughter Cassandra instructed, the former in augury, and the latter in prophecy. According to Tully (*o*), no person could have been king of Persia, who was not previously acquainted with the discipline and wisdom of the Magi. Formerly the Japanese emperors were Dairos or sovereign pontiffs; and the emperor of China possessed the pontifical function, as the most exalted person to do homage to Shangti (*p*). Theseus (*q*) committed the care of religion and the interpretation of sacred matters to the nobility; Lycurgus (*r*) consulted Apollo, previous to the establishment of his political institutions; and the laws of Solon (*s*) and those of the 12 tables were not inattentive to religion. These men did not take a superficial view of human nature, like some ancient and modern unbelievers; but were acquainted with the tempers and capacities of mankind from experience and observation. Conscious of their own insufficiency for conducting their political plans, and having found the minds of their subjects impressed with some idea of religion, they judged it expedient to give the religious principle such a direction as might advance their designs. To accomplish this end, they pretended to an intercourse with some deity from whom they professed to have received their civil institutions. The Egyptian legislators pretended to have received their laws from Amasis and Mnemes, Zoroaster the Bactrian from Vesta, the Cretans

(*n*) Virg. *Æn.* iii. 80. (*o*) *ib.* (*p*) *Mod. Univ. Hist.*  
 Vol. iii Folio Introd. to Hist. of China.  
 (*q*) Plutarch, (*r*) *ib.* (*s*) *ib.*

Minos and Rhadamanthus from Jupiter, Lycurgus from Apollo, Romulus from Consus, and Numa from Egeria. Lawgivers and founders of states employed religion, in supplying the defects of their laws and the weakness of their authority; nor was any regular government ever established without some mode of worship: as if the former was defective without the latter, and the one a necessary appendage to the other. We shall now perceive the use which was made of false religion by the wisest of the Heathens. These men inculcated reverence for an oath, deified Truth, Justice, Concord and Fidelity, and erected temples in honour of them. The Romans built temples not only to these, but to Victory and Liberty; and poured out their supplications before the altar of Fear, that their troops might not be dismayed in the hour of danger. That a veneration even for false gods contributed to make oaths binding, leagues obligatory, and compacts inviolable, appears from the following passage of Cicero's (t) 2d book of laws: "Who can deny the utility of these opinions, that knows how many things derive authority from the obligation of an oath, and what advantage the religious observance of treaties produces?" A celebrated writer (u) observes that Numa, in order to render private contracts obligatory, deified Fidelity, built a temple to it, and instituted sacrifices in honour of it. He expected, says this antiquary, that a regard for this virtue, diffused thro' the state, would be gradually communicated to each individual; nor was he herein mistaken. Faith became so respected, that she had more weight

(t) Cap. vii.  
Oxon. 1714.

(u) Dion Halicarn. Cap. lxxv. p. 75. Edit.



**CHAP. I.** } than witnesses or oaths; and magistrates in difficult cases used sometimes to rest the determination of a cause on the Faith of the contending parties. A Greek historian (*v*), speaking of the Romans, regrets the degeneracy of his own countrymen who were on the decline; while the Romans were making large strides towards universal empire. He affirms that their forefathers introduced those notions of the gods and of a future state wisely; and that the present generation betrayed great weakness in rejecting them, and appeals to facts for the truth of his assertion. "In Greece," says he, "they who are "entrusted with the public money, tho' it be "but one talent, and tho' they should give a "tenfold security before twenty witnesses, yet "cannot be prevailed on to keep their faith; "while among the Romans it is as rare to find "any offending in this way." The Romans were taught by the laws of the twelve tables, that the violation of an oath brought down the wrath of God upon the perjured, and branded them with infamy and disgrace among men. As an encouragement to valour, these laws (*w*) enjoined honour not only to those gods who were always deemed such, but also to Hercules, Esculapius, Romulus, Castor and Pollux, who were deified for their merits. Those laws prohibited men to worship any vice; and required them to deify those commendable qualities by which heroes obtained heaven, namely, understanding, virtue, piety and fidelity. Such were the happy effects even of false religion, when under the direction of wise and good men!

(*v*) Polyb. Lib. vi. Cap. 34.

(*w*) See Rosini Antiq. Lib. viii. Cap. 6.

Among the ancient Heathens, scarcely any war was waged, any peace concluded, any new form of government established, or any new law enacted without consulting the oracles. CHAP. I  
Effects of  
Heathen  
oracles.

They were sometimes hired to return answers adapted to particular purposes; and Vandale has proved, that in many instances, they originated in the craft of designing men, and in the blind credulity of the ignorant and superstitious. Philip of Macedon, having been desirous of a peace with the Athenians, bribed the Delphic priests to prophesy destruction to those who waged war against him(x); and the Alcæonides, who were expelled from Athens by the Pisistratidæ, had recourse to indirect practices for the purpose of inducing her to exhort the Spartans to deliver Athens from servitude(y). That oracles served as political contrivances, appears from the answers which were usually made to those who consulted them. The Athenians having consulted the oracle of Apollo, relative to the mode of worship which they should adopt; the oracle commanded them to adhere to the religion of their ancestors(z). Ambiguity and obscurity were their general characteristics; and the priests returned such answers as gratified the consultors, and suited their own purposes, or those of their rulers. In cases where the responses were more explicit, if the event did not correspond with the prediction, the priests imputed the failure to some error in the interpretation, or to some defect in the mode of consulting the oracle. In the 10th year of the siege of Veii, the Roman soldiers importunately demanded permis-

(x) Demosth. Philippics.

(y) Herodot. Lib. v.

(z) Tull. de leg. Lib. ii. cap. 16.

### *The History of the Effects*

1. sion to return home. But the Alban lake having overflowed, they were easily prevailed on to persist in the siege, by an oracular declaration, that the city of Veii would be taken the very year in which the lake overflowed (*a*). The following fact evinces, that the priests turned to their own use a large proportion of the donations made to the temples where they presided. When the Romans consulted the oracle about the overflowing of the Alban lake, we find, towards the conclusion of the Delphic answer, that the interest of the temple and priest was not forgotten nor disregarded. "When you have ended the war, says the God, and vanquished your enemies, bring ample offerings and donations to my temples" (*b*). Cities where oracles were consulted, were inhabited by poets, augurs, aruspices, and other ministers of religion; but chiefly by innkeepers, by sellers of frankincense, of spices and of beasts for sacrifice. Those impostors dispatched emissaries to distant regions, to propagate the fame of oracles; and employed spies, to obtain intelligence of the business of consultors. An extraordinary imposture was practised by the oracle of Trophonius, on those who consulted it. He who descended into the cave of this God, to consult his oracle, was required to drink inebriating waters; and jugglers failed not to practise various deceptions on him during his intoxication. While the consultor was beside himself, or otherwise unguarded; the priests, by overhearing his prayers to Trophonius, or by the intelligence of his domestics, discovered his business, and were prepared in their responses. Sometimes

(*a*) Liv. Lib. v. cap. 15 & 16      (*b*) ib.

they

they protracted the time by prayers, sacrifices, CHAP. I.  
ablutions and inspection of the bowels of ani-  
mals ; in hopes of obtaining in the interim some  
hint of the errand of the consultants (c).

Let us now take a view of the political ef- Effects of  
fects of Heathenism in the Roman republic, Heathen-  
and in other ancient and civilized states. ism on the  
Hea- internal  
then rulers, having been in a great measure policy of  
strangers to true religion, employed the false the Ro-  
to the useful purpose of restraining the feroci- mans.  
ty of rude and uncultivated societies. Livy (d)  
assures us, this was the object of the religious  
rites instituted by Numa ; and Q. Curtius (e)  
observes, that false religion is a powerful re-  
straint on barbarians who are cruel, fickle and  
ungovernable, unrestrained by that principle.  
As to the influence of Gentilism in the Roman  
empire, let us examine its political effects at the  
election of kings, in assemblies of the people,  
in peace and war. At the election of Numa,  
the augur, having marked out the divisions of  
the heavens with his curved staff, and laid his  
right hand on the king's head, thus addressed  
a prayer to Jupiter: " We pray you, father  
" Jupiter (f), if you approve of this Numa,  
" whose head I hold, for king of Rome, to  
" give some sign of your approbation within  
" those limits which I marked out with my  
" staff." Not only in this instance, but in al-  
most every enterprize civil or military, the  
Romans drew presages of the event from the  
flight or chirping of birds, from the entrails  
of beasts, from the answers of oracles, from

(c) See Vandale Dissert. de oraculis

(d) Lib. i. cap. 19. (e) Lib. iv. cap. 39.

(f) Liv, Lib. i. cap. 18.

dreams

CHAP. I. dreams and prodigies (*g*). In all these cases the priests were the interpreters, and explained things in such a manner as suited their political convenience. Magistrates were deposed, and public assemblies adjourned or dissolved, when thunder and lightning came from the left; nor was it lawful to hold assemblies while there was thunder or lightning (*b*). In Rome, ignorance and superstition were the bulwarks of the patrician prerogatives against the encroachments of the plebeians. This latter class were perpetually instigated by the tribunes to extort from the nobles a share in the public offices, the exclusive possession of which had been claimed by the patricians. But of all the artifices of these men to counteract and defeat the designs of the plebeians, superstition was the chief. By its influence, they deposed magistrates, and prorogued popular assemblies; and by its means enlarged their own authority, and abridged that of the people. In the year of Rome, 356, the military tribunes were all except one elected from the plebeians. The same year a plague and famine having raged at Rome; the patricians took advantage of the terrors and credulity of the people, to inveigh against the innovation as the cause of those disasters. By maintaining that the Gods were angry at the admission of the plebeians to any part of the consular dignity, the patricians prevailed on the people to restore the ancient mode of election, and to choose the military tribunes of the subsequent year out of their own body (*i*). After Rome had been destroyed by the Gauls, the people, urged on by the tribunes, were with

(*g*) Tull. de nat. deor. Lib. ii. cap. 65.

(*h*) De Divin. Lib. ii, cap. 18. (*i*) Liv. Lib. v. cap. 14  
difficulty

difficulty prevented from removing to Veii, and making that city the seat of empire ; and were diverted from their purpose by a speech of Camillus, the conclusion of which was a pathetic address to the prejudices of a superstitious people. “ Here, in this city, says that general, “ have been preserved the sacred fires of Vesta ; “ here the shields sent down from heaven, have “ been deposited ; while we remain in this city, we may be certain of the protection of “ the Gods (k).”

CHAP. I.

Few Roman generals would hazard an engagement or undertake any expedition without consulting the ministers of religion, who judged of the event from the ease or difficulty with which a victim was led to the altar, or from other particulars. If it struggled on receiving the blow, if it ran away, if the entrails fell out of the priest's hands, or if certain animals crossed the way to the left ; in all these cases it was reckoned a sure sign of the displeasure of the Gods. When an ox led to be sacrificed, advanced with an easy air, in a right line, and without resistance, it was accounted a good omen ; whereas his resistance, his windings and his manner of falling, gave rise to various interpretations. The aruspices examined the entrails of victims ; and concluded the Gods approved of a project, if they were found, and condemned it if they were defective. The Romans imagined the sacred chickens were never neglected without loss, nor attended to without success ; and supposed these birds could give fitter information when to risque a battle than the most experienced captains. In consequence

Effects of  
Gentilism  
in Rome in  
time of  
war.

(k) Ib. Cap. 34.

**CHAP. I.** of this opinion, the generals of those days were so attentive to superstitious rites, that they usually suspended an enterprize, until they consulted the chickens and their keeper about the event. Upon their feeding greedily or only scattering their food was thought to depend the success of a battle, often the fate of a kingdom or state; and the commander who treated them with disrespect was certain of being deemed impious, and the occasion of public calamities. In the first Punic war, the chickens having been consulted by offering them food, and the birds having declined it; Claudius Pulcher in anger flung them into a pool of water, that they might drink, as he expressed it, since they refused to eat (1). Lucilius observed that this instance of impiety and ridicule of the Gods was the cause of a defeat at sea, and of great grief to the author and to his country; and adds, that the inattention of his colleague Junius to the auspices was supposed to have occasioned the loss of a fleet in a storm. Therefore, says Lucilius (m), Claudius Pulcher was condemned by the people, and Junius put himself to death; and relative to these melancholy events, Cicero (n) observes, that the republic was enlarged during the command of men who had been attentive to religion. The history of the ancient Romans may convince us, their superstitions assisted them in extending their conquests. They rarely ventured a battle without a strong persuasion of the approbation of the Gods, signified to them by the various means already pointed out. Assured of the divine protection, they marched into the

(1) Val. Max. Lib. 1 cap. 4.

(m) Tull. de nat. Deor. Lib. ii cap. 3.

(n) ib.

field of battle, inspired with religious confidence; and fought with that intrepidity which commonly ensures success. So great was the influence of superstition on the Roman officers and foldiers, that Cicero (*c*) ascribes to it the extraordinary fortitude with which they encountered dangers and difficulties. In consequence of it, generals often rashly exposed themselves to certain death, rushed blindfold among their enemies, and devoted themselves to the Gods for the service of the republic. Nothing could more forcibly excite soldiers to martial achievements than to see their commanders animated by enthusiasm; nor so strike terror into foes as to see their antagonists rush forward, unawed by danger, unterrified by death. The same author (*p*) asserts that the instruments to which the Romans were chiefly indebted for the conquest of the world, were not strength or policy, but piety and religion. Horace (*q*) ascribes victory and extent of empire to the religious principle; and the miseries with which Italy was afflicted, to a disregard of it. Montesquieu (*r*) assigns several causes of the decline of the Roman empire, and of the depravity of its inhabitants; while Montagu (*s*) considers the atheistical doctrines of the sect of Epicurus, as the real cause of the rapid depravity of the Roman manners. "As long", says this ingenious writer, "as the religious principle remained, it controlled manners, and checked the progress of luxury in proportion to its influence; but when atheism had corrupted this principle, the

(*c*) *ib.* (*p*) *De Aruspicum responsis.*

(*q*) *Carm. Lib. iii, ode, vi, verse 5.* (*r*) *ch. vi.*

(*s*) *Rise and fall of ancient republics.*

great



CHAP. I. "great bar to corruption was removed, and  
 "the passions were left without check or control." To support this opinion, it was necessary to prove, that the Gods of the Heathens enjoined morality and forbade luxury and dissoluteness of manners. But as the Heathen religion did not require pure morality; it is not clear how atheism, or a disbelief of false Gods could have led to vice or depravity of manners.

Effects of Heathen-ism in Greece and other nations. In other Heathen empires besides the Roman, men employed false religion to advance their own interest and that of the state. To it Alexander the Great was as much indebted for his victories as to valour and humanity. Though this hero affected to conquer by mere dint of bravery; yet had superstition considerable influence in extending his conquests. He seldom engaged in any important enterprize, without consulting Aristander his soothsayer, who never failed to explain incidents in such a way as advanced the interest of his master. Just before he passed the river Granicus, he observed that that day had always been accounted unfortunate by the Macedonians. His army having been terrified on this account, he changed the name of the month, and ordered Aristander to write on the liver of a beast which he had sacrificed, that the Gods had granted the victory to Alexander. This stratagem inspired his troops with invincible courage; and they all cried out that they must be victorious, since the Gods so expressly declared in his favour. In the heat of a battle between him and Darius, when the Macedonians were hard pressed by the Persians; Aristander clothed in white, advanced in the front rank, and cried out, that he saw an eagle

eagle hovering over the king's head, as a prognostic of victory. He pointed with his finger to the pretended bird; and the soldiers believing him, renewed the attack with fresh vigour and were victorious. The history of Alexander's wars furnishes other instances<sup>(u)</sup> of this kind, let these suffice as specimens of the rest.

CHAP. I.

The Egyptians celebrated several feasts in honour of their gods, at which were exhibited many scenes of cruelty and disorder. In the feasts of Isis they tumbled an ass down a precipice; in those of Mars they fought furiously with clubs; and in the feasts of Bacchus they indulged freely in riot and debauchery. Nothing could be more absurd than the worship paid by the Egyptians to cats, dogs, wolves, crocodiles and other beasts. Lands were set apart for their maintenance; and they were attended by persons of distinction who were respected for being engaged in that sacred office. If one of these animals were killed with design the offender was instantly put to death; if involuntarily, he was punished at the discretion of the priests. The family in which a cat died a natural death shaved their eyebrows; where a dog died they shaved the whole body; and both dogs and cats were buried with solemnity<sup>(w)</sup>. The Egyptians had so superstitious a veneration for a cat, that they chose to eat each other in a season of famine, rather than kill one of those sacred animals<sup>(x)</sup>. The populace were so enraged at a Roman who accidentally killed a cat, that neither the authority of the king nor a respect for

Effects of  
Heathen-  
ism in  
Egypt.

(u) Frenshemii Supplem. to Q. Curtius, ii. 5. & Plut. vita Alex. (w) Herod., Lib. ii. (x) Diod. Sic. Lib. i.

CHAP. I. the Roman name could save him from destruction (*y*). Some of the Egyptians esteemed the crocodile sacred, and fed him with consecrated bread; and on his death they pickled and deposited him in a sacred coffin (*z*). In beautiful fields at Memphis there was kept a spotted calf, all whose motions were judged ominous and prophetical, and to which offerings were made under the title of Apis. This idol was consulted by observing into which of two chambers prepared for him he entered; and prognostics were drawn from his accepting or declining food that was offered him. The indecency of his death was generally prevented by drowning him; but sometimes he was suffered to die of old age. When the Apis, Mnevis, &c. died, the people put on mourning, intered them with devotion mixed with sorrow, and celebrated the funeral pomp with lavish expence. As soon as the funeral honours to Apis were ended the priests sought for a calf as like him as possible; and when they found it, all mourning was at an end. There was also a sacred ox at Heliopolis which brought crowds thither to offer up their devotions; and the priests encouraged such delusion from motives of interest. The principal gods of Egypt were worshipped all over the kingdom; while the worship of inferior deities was not universal, but confined to particular cities and provinces. Several cities were denominated from the gods or animals worshipped in them, as Diospolis, Heliopolis and Cynopolis. Almost every city worshipped a different idol; and the inhabitants of some eat the animals which were revered by the others. Diodorus Siculus (*a*) observes

(*y*) *ibid* & Herod, Lib. ii. (*z*) *ibid* (*a*) Lib. i.

that

That this diversity of worship was a source of disturbances; and that those disturbances were fomented by the kings who wished to prevent conspiracies against themselves, by dividing the turbulent into adverse sects. Cambyzes the Persian monarch, in his war against Egypt, laid siege to Pelusium; and finding his troops galled by the enemies arrows made use of a stratagem which succeeded admirably. He placed in the front of his army a multitude of cats, dogs, sheep and other animals deemed sacred, advanced with safety to the garrison and made himself master of it; the Egyptians having been afraid even to throw a dart(*b*). Hence it appears that some superstitions of Egypt had a considerable influence on the policy of that nation, and on the temper of its inhabitants; while the morals of the people did not receive the smallest improvement. Juvenal(*c*) thus describes the superstitions of Egypt and some effects of them in that nation before the light of Christianity dawned upon them.

*Quis nescit Volusi Bythynice qualia demens  
Egyptus portenta colat? crocodilon adorat  
Pars hæc: illa pavet saturam serpentibus ibim  
Illic cæruleos, hic piscem fluminis, illic  
Oppida tota canem venerantur nemo Dianam.  
Purum et cæpe nefas violare ac frangere morsu  
O sanctas gentes quibus hæc nascuntur in hortis  
Numina! lanatis animalibus abstinet omnis  
Mensa. Nefas hic fætum jugulare capellæ,  
Carnibus humanis vesci licet.*

A view of the popular theology of the Pagans can not fail to convince us, that it tended to prompt them to several vices and crimes.

The popular religion of the Greeks and Romans vile:

(*b*) Polyæn. Stratag. Lib. viii: cap: 9. (*c*) Sat. xv.

CHAP. I. Heathen nations attributed to their gods anger, revenge, fear, grief, jealousy and other passions and imperfections unworthy of the divine nature. The fictitious gods of the Gentiles were rather stigmatized for their vices, than distinguished by their virtues, and patronized in their deity by their lives and actions: having been supposed guilty of adultery, incest and other unnatural crimes. According to the *Greek* religion, Mercury was a thief, Venus a rioter, and Bacchus a drunkard; Jupiter destroyed his father, Saturn murdered his own offspring, and was delighted with sacrifices of young children. According to the theology of Homer (a), the father of men and gods was the author of strife, encouraged the Trojans to perjury by his daughter Venus, loved Sarpedon and Hector and grieved for them. The other gods conspired against Jupiter and would have bound him with chains, had they not dreaded Briareus. Mars and Venus were wounded by Diomedes; gods and goddesses were armed against each other; and Jupiter expressed a more ardent passion for Juno on one occasion, than he ever did for any of his wives or mistresses before. This god lay with Alcmena in the shape of her husband; and Minerva assisted Ulysses to hide his money in a cave and to wrestle with a beggar. So unworthy were the ideas which the Tyrians entertained of their gods, that they chained the statue of Hercules; that he might not desert to Alexander the great who besieged them (c). The Persians adored Arimanius the author of evil, the Greeks their Cacodemons and the Latins their Vejoves; while other nations made

(a) *Iliad*, iv. 34. xvi. 433. xxii. 168. i. 399. xiv. 315. *Odyss.* xiii.

(c) *Q. Curtius*, iv. 14.

that to a Fever, to Winds and to every  
 distemper that could injure them. Titus Tartius  
 formed the goddess Cloacina; and both the  
 consuls and Romans erected temples to Con-  
 tinentia, to Impudence and Licentiousness (f).  
 (g) condemned the Heathen theology,  
 and the genealogies of the gods according to  
 Hesiod and Homer as false and impolitic, and  
 maintained that tho' true they ought not to be  
 published; as tending to debauch the morals  
 of the youth and encouraging revenge, murder,  
 rapes, drunkenness, theft and rebellion against  
 parents. This philosopher condemns Homer  
 for representing the gods constantly engaged in  
 feuds and contention; and observes that poet-  
 ical fables ought to serve the wise purposes of  
 policy or morals. Cicero (b) applauds Plato  
 for banishing Homer and other poets from his  
 imaginary republic; since their absurdities do  
 mischief by the pleasant stile in which they are  
 written. "These men continues he, introduced  
 " gods inflamed with anger and lust; and ex-  
 " hibited their wars, wounds, hatred, dissen-  
 " tions, births, deaths, complaints, lamenta-  
 " tions, intemperance, adulteries, fetters, co-  
 " rruptions with mortals and men sprung from  
 " immortal gods." Hence we may conclude  
 that, at Christs appearance, the state of the  
 popular religion was truly deplorable; it will  
 fully appear in the 3d chapter of this history,  
 that it was productive of revenge, human sacri-  
 fices, self-murder, fornication, adultery and  
 incest; and that these and other crimes were  
 checked by the gospel.

(f) Tull. de Leg. ii. 11 & 17. (g) De Rep. Lib. ii. p. 605.  
 & Lib. iii. p. 613. Edit. Frankfort, 1602. (b) De nat. Deor.  
 Lib. i. cap. 42. & Tuscul. Quæst. ii. 11.

## CHAP. II.

GENERAL TENDENCY AND EFFECTS OF THE  
JEWISH RELIGION.

*Origin and general design of the Mosaic institutions.—Tendency of particular rites, precepts and prohibitions of Moses.—Judaism was an imperfect system of religion.*

## CHAP. II.

Origin and  
general de-  
sign of the  
Mosaic in-  
stitutions.

THE Israelites who settled in Egypt, during the administration of Joseph, multiplied quickly; and their descendants became a rich, warlike and well-united people. The Egyptians, alarmed at their growing power, oppressed them severely, and obliged them to carry burdens; to enervate their bodies and prevent their encrease. Moses was sent by God to liberate this people, to conduct them from Egypt, to abolish idolatry among them, and to instruct them in the knowledge of the one true God. All the Mosaic institutions tend to one great point, namely, to prevent or remove idolatry, to promote the worship of the true God, and to advance men in theological and moral knowledge. The Hebrew lawgiver adapted his institutions to the genius of a people who had been oppressed in Egypt, children in information, and accustomed to the rites of an idolatrous kingdom. He must have known the absurdity of addressing or instructing children, as if they were mature in understanding, or peasants and mechanics as if they were learned and refined. For the purpose of gradually leading men from idolatry to the worship

worship of the true God, he enjoined several rites and precepts unessential in themselves ; just as many years are employed in learning the rudiments of arts, and in reading books which have no intrinsic value, but as they lead to the acquisition of useful knowledge. Even the most exceptionable parts of the law tended to divert the Hebrews from the worship of false Gods, to separate them from idolatrous nations who were likely to seduce them, or to remind them of their obligations to the true God. Moses abolished some seemingly innocent customs, such as shaving the head round, eating over blood, wearing linen and woollen, &c. as tending to encourage superstition and idolatry among the people. He prohibited not only idolatrous worship, but even acts which led to it, such as branding their bodies, cutting their flesh, planting a grove near an altar, setting up an image, erecting painted stones, and other acts destitute of moral turpitude. He opposed diametrically some Gentile institutions ; while he complied with the prejudices of his own people in trifling instances ; that they might not reject his moral and rational doctrines. Knowing that men will not adopt new rites, unless they appear in the garb of the old ; he transcribed some profane rites into his worship, and changed their object from idols to God. We admit that the Jewish legislator repeatedly forbids his people to adopt the rites and manners of the Gentiles ; but such passages only condemn idolatry, impurity and every thing which clashes with good morals, and with the belief of one God. Let us now briefly examine the tendency and use of certain Mosaic rites, precepts and prohibitions, which seem to have little

or



CHAP. II. OR NO CONNEXION WITH RELIGION, MORALS OR POLICY. At these the unbeliever more particularly levels his objections; being unable to comprehend why God should enjoin points which have no moral excellence in them, and which appear to promote neither his own honour, nor the advantage of his creatures. But by examining those points (a), we shall find that some of them tend to prevent or remove idolatry; that not one of them is immoral; that some of them conduce to the advancement of virtue; and that all of them evince the wisdom of the lawgiver, who adapts his laws to the tempers, prejudices and circumstances of his people. It is difficult to explain the reasons of all the Mosaic institutions at this distance of time; as many of them allude to customs which prevailed in the days of Moses, and which are unknown to us now, from our ignorance of antiquity. But if in many cases we can vindicate the wisdom of them, for the times when and the persons to whom they were prescribed; it will appear unreasonable to condemn them in other cases, where we have not equal evidence of their wisdom and expedience.

Tendency  
of particu-  
lar rites,  
precepts  
and prohibi-  
tions of  
Moses,

The Hebrew lawgiver employed various means to inspire a carnal people with respect for God and his worship. The high priest alone was admitted to the holy of holies, and but once a year; none was allowed to enter the sanctuary with shoes or unwashed hands, or to turn their backs on it, when going out of the tabernacle. The dress of the Hebrew

(a) See Spencer de legibus Hebræorum, Lib. i. & ii. & passim.

priests was to be splendid, to procure them respect; and their fortunes competent to preserve them from contempt. Persons deformed were excluded from the priesthood; and ministers of religion were forbidden to marry an harlot, a divorced woman, or even a widow. Formerly the patriarchs and heads of families, exercised the ministerial function, and in process of time every Heathen sacrificed in the fields or on mountains to idols or demons. To stop this source of idolatry, Moses confined the priesthood to one family who had been zealous in punishing even their own idolatrous relations. Ancient idolaters used to besmear their victims with honey; which induced Moses to prohibit offering honey unto the Lord; and boiled a kid in its mother's milk, and sprinkled their fields and orchards with the broth; which caused him to forbid seething a kid in its mother's milk. The Heathen priests having worn garments mixed of linen and woollen, to express their gratitude to certain demons for their benign influence over their flax and sheep; to remove their mistake, the Hebrew lawgiver forbade his people to wear linen and woollen together. Some ancient idolaters having considered maiming and mangling themselves, as acceptable to the infernal Gods, and to the spirits of the deceased; Moses forbade his people to make cuttings in the flesh for the dead, or to print marks upon their bodies. At the funerals of the ancients, they used to cut their hair round, to pluck off their hair or beard, and to strew it on the corpses of the deceased. To remove such superstitious rites, Moses prohibited the Israelites to round the corners of their heads, or to mar the corners of their beards.

## CHAP. II.

beards. The Jewish legislator distinguished between clean and unclean beasts, and excluded some animals from the tables of the Israelites; to separate them from convivial intercourse with profane nations, who might have seduced them into idolatry. He ordered to kill the animal at the time the Egyptians were worshipping it; to roast the flesh which that people eat raw, to eat the head which they never eat, to dress the entrails which they never dressed, but employed to superstitious purposes (*b*). He instituted the Sabbath, to commemorate the creation, to induce men to look on created things as unworthy of their worship, and to inspire them with humanity to servants, to slaves and even to brutes. I cannot agree with Voltaire, that Judaism consists entirely in offerings of birds and beasts, in show and ceremony. It is as unreasonable to confine the Jewish law to such points, as the Gospel to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Mosaic code, besides many rites, requires us to believe in one God, who created the world, to love and fear him; prohibits murder, adultery, stealth and false witness, and enjoins justice, charity and love towards our neighbour. However, the Mosaic institution, though superior in wisdom to Heathen systems was defective in some points.

Judaism  
was an im-  
perfect sys-  
tem of re-  
ligion.

From the high ideas conceived of Moses as a man commissioned by God, we may naturally expect that his religious system should be a perfect one; nor would we be disappointed in our expectations. His law, tho imperfect in itself, was perfect in its kind, had the per-

(*b*) Spencer, *ib.* and Lewis *Heb. antiq.*

fection intended by its author, and answered the purposes for which it was designed. Moses knew it to be defective, and would have furnished a more perfect one, were it not for the hardness of the hearts of his people. It appears from some passages of Exodus (*l*), which were written before the Levitical law, that he wished to revive the old patriarchal religion. The Hebrew doctors (*m*) maintained, that his chief design was to inculcate reverence towards God, and good-will to man. But having on his return from the mount, found his people attached to idolatry, he indulged them with numerous rites, for the purpose of diverting them from the worship of idols. The Hebrew code was not intended for the whole human race, but for the Jews only; not as a perfect law, but as a step to a perfect one; not to last for ever, but to the coming of the Messiah. The Hebrew ritual was not sufficiently general to serve all mankind: it does not mention a covenant between God and mankind, but between God and the Israelites; requires the Hebrews to repair thrice a year to particular places appointed for God's worship; commands the celebration of feasts in commemoration of benefits conferred on that people only, and enjoins duties which other nations could not perform with propriety or convenience. The rewards and punishments of the Mosaic law were prosperity and adversity in the land of Canaan; which sanctions were applicable to the Jews only, and could not extend to the rest of mankind. From such circumstances it appears, that the Hebrew code

(*l*) Ch. xix. xxv.

(*m*) See Th. Burnet de fide & officio Christianorum.

CHAP. II. was local and temporary ; and not intended as a rule for all men, who could not observe its laws, nor be influenced by its sanctions. But the Mosaic law was defective in other particulars. It promises no supernatural aid to enable men to conquer their frailties, and offers to transgressors no hope of pardon or mercy ; those strong motives to amendment and preventives of despair. So imperfect a revelation could not have been intended for a perpetual one ; *had the first covenant been faultless, there would have been no place found for the second.* From what has been said it appears, that Judaism was imperfect even in its purest state ; and surely this imperfect system, as well as the morals of the Jews were so corrupted at Christ's appearance, as to render a new revelation expedient and necessary. Judaism which originally required many ceremonies, became loaded with a multitude of unauthorised ones at Christ's appearance, and debased by the false interpretations and corrupt maxims of its professors ; and the morals of the Jews were such as might be expected from the deplorable corruption of religion among them. The degeneracy of the Jews at Christ's appearance, fully appears from various testimonies, to which we refer such as desire more information on this subject (\*).

(\*) Juven. Sat. xiv Joseph: de Bello, Lib. v or vi, p. 1243  
 Edit. Oxon. Theodoreti Serm. ix, x. Basnage Book i, ch.  
 v. Mosh. de rebus Christianorum. cap. 2.

C H A P. III

GENERAL TENDENCY AND PARTICULAR EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY ON THE MANNERS AND LAWS OF MANY NATIONS.

*The New Testament tends to improve men in virtue.—So do the writings of the Apostolical fathers.—Impossible to exhibit all the happy effects of the Gospel.—Defences against calumnies prove the virtues of the primitive Christians.—Reformation by the Gospel proved from the Epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter.—From the works of the fathers.—And from Heathen writers.—General effects of Christianity.—It and its teachers diffused and preserved literature.—Abated illiberal prejudices.—Checked pride and promoted humility.—Checked revenge and promoted forgiveness.—Discouraged licenced fornication.—Discouraged polygamy.—Discouraged adultery and licentious divorces.—Abolished human sacrifices.—Checked the murder of children.—Discouraged self-murder.—Checked cruel sports.—Discouraged duels.—Checked the violence of war among fellow-subjects.—And among different nations.—Improved rulers and subjects in virtue and happiness.—Checked the violence of princes.—Rendered its sincere professors just and honest.—Patient and constant.—Chaste and continent.—It improved the condition of females.—The Gospel a source of kindness to the distressed.—encouraged hospitality to strangers.—Was the parent of charitable institutions.*

*institutions.——Emancipated slaves.——Abated the rigours of servitude.——Checked the sale of men.——Redeemed captives.——Protected widows and orphans against injustice.——Orphan princes against usurpers.——Monarchs against rebels and usurpers.——Subjects against exaction and oppression.——The weak against the powerful in suits at law.——and the shipwrecked against plunderers.——Effects of the Gospel on the Arabs.——Its effects on the Ethiopians.——Its effects on the Persians and Armenians.——Its effects on the manners and laws of the Britons.——Its effects on the Welsh.——Its effects on the Scots.——Its effect on the Irish.——Its effects on the Goths.——Its effects on the Bessi.——Its effects on the Spaniards.——Its effects on the Huns, Geloni, Heruli and Abasgi.——Its effects on some German nations.——Its effects on the Gauls, Franks and Burgundians.——Its effects on the laws of the Visigoths.——Its effects on the laws of the Lombards and Bavarians.——Its effects on the Saxons and other barbarians.——Its effects on the Bulgarians, Moravians and Bohemians.——Its effects on the Danes.——Its effects on the Swedes and Norwegians.——Its effects on the Russians.——Its effects on the Silesians and Poles.——Its effects on the Hungarians.——Its effects on the Prussians.——Its effects on the Livonians and Portuguese.——Its effect on the Lithuanians.——Its effects in Virginia and other modern Pagan nations.——Its effects in Paraguay and other nations.——Those happy effects not to be ascribed to civilization.——Present effects of Christianity.*

HAVING

**H**AVING briefly pointed out the influence of the Heathen and Jewish religions, let us examine the tendency of the Gospel doctrines, with their actual effects on individuals and communities. We may judge of its excellent tendency from a recital of its doctrines, and from the writings of the apostolical fathers. A recital of its doctrines and precepts might convince any man that it enjoins every virtue and prohibits those vices which injure the peace and happiness of society. It requires truth, justice, beneficence, humility, self-denial, forbearance and forgiveness; virtues which moderate the passions, banish cruelty, and render men mild, peaceable, benevolent and courteous. Christianity not only points out men's duty, but promises the assistance of God's grace in the performance of it; and exhibits a striking example of spotless purity which we may safely imitate. The Gospel teaches that worldly sufferings are equally incident to good and bad men; being sent to the former as trials of their virtue, and to the latter as punishments of their vices: a doctrine which prevents despair in the virtuous man, and encourages him to hold fast in his integrity under the most calamitous circumstances. Christianity represents all men as children of the same God, and heirs of the same salvation; which doctrine tends to humble the proud, to add dignity to the lowly, and to render the opulent gentle and condescending. The Christian institution requires husbands to be affectionate and indulgent to their wives; wives to be faithful and respectful to their husbands, and both to be true and constant to each other.

The New Testament tends to improve men in virtue,



CHAP. III. It enjoins masters to be kind and gentle to servants; and servants to be sincere and attentive to their masters. If forcibly impressed on the minds of men, it disposes them to perform their respective duties in every state and condition, gently, justly and conscientiously. The books of the New Testament require men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; to live soberly and righteously in the present world, and to do kind offices even to enemies. The Gospel forbids us to harbour impure thoughts, enjoins us to abandon our vices, though as dear to us as a right eye or right hand; to be wise as serpents but harmless as doves. Christianity does not prohibit any rational enjoyment, nor restrain any pleasures but such as are pernicious to ourselves or our neighbours. It curbs only the excesses of the licentious, and confines their wanderings within the proper channel; like the banks of a river, which both direct the current and prevent its overflowing, without stopping its progress or retarding its course. The Christian scheme tends to prevent a continuance in immorality; by promising pardon for the past, provided offenders return and obey for the future. The Gospel assures the penitent that his sins will be forgiven; and the Gospel alone gives this assurance. Unassisted reason will not assure a man that his sins will be forgiven, even on sincere repentance. We are bound to an uniform obedience to God's laws, every day and hour of our lives, and to be obedient for the future, though we had been innocent for the past. Hence that uniform obedience which was required even from those who had never transgressed could not be supposed to atone for past offences. Christianity is adapted

ed to every nation and climate; since it checks anger, revenge, pride and lust to which men are prone in hot climates; and lessens that insensibility and indifference to mankind which the inhabitants of cold climates are liable to. The Gospel could not expressly enjoin valour, friendship or patriotism, without considerable inconvenience; but enjoins qualities on which these virtues are founded. It recommends gentleness, forgiveness and a contempt of danger and of death which are the most essential ingredients in the character of the hero; and intrinsic goodness charity and indulgence to the faults of others, which are the strongest bands of private friendship. Christ shewed special marks of regard for Lazarus, and chose John for his bosom friend: and the Apostles idea of friendship must have been powerfully strong, when he said, *greater love than this hath no man, to lay down his life for his friend.* The spirit of Christianity is friendly to patriotism; by enlarging the heart and affections, and by forbidding pride, avarice and luxury which have been destructive to nations. Gospel sanctions by inspiring a comparative indifference for this world, must render the sincere Christian incorruptible by wealth, honours or pleasures, those general tempters to venality and corruption. The mind which is fully impressed with Gospel motives would spurn at a bribe, and rationally sacrifice a temporal interest or pleasure for a greater one in reversion. An author whose only object was truth, thus expressed himself in respect to the sufficiency of scripture morality. "The Gospel, saith he (a),

(a) Locke's Letter to Mr. King, A. D. 1703.

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“ contains so perfect a body of ethics, that reason may be excused from that enquiry ; since she may find men’s duty clearer and easier in revelation than in herself.” His authority is decisive on this point ; since he analysed the human understanding, and was better acquainted with its powers than all the ancient and modern unbelievers. The New Testament not only points out man’s duty, but furnishes powerful motives to the practice of its precepts. Its rewards are such as *eye hath not seen nor ear heard* ; and its threats are eminently calculated to terrify offenders. The Gospels and Epistles recite the vices which prevail among men, and discourage from the practice of them by words to this purpose, *I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of Heaven.* How infinitely more forcible is this awful threat, than declamations on the beauty of virtue, or subtle arguments on the moral sense or the fitness of things, which are totally unintelligible to the bulk of mankind ?

Works of  
apostolical  
fathers  
tend to im-  
prove men  
in virtue.

A. D. 65.

108.

The works of those Christian writers who succeeded the apostles immediately, were calculated to improve the readers in the practical duties of religion. Clemens Romanus writing to the Corinthians, recommended to wives chastity and a love of their husbands, and to all peace, patience, charity, forgiveness, humility, honesty, obedience to rulers and reverence to elders. Thus Clement enjoins several virtues which are beneficial to society ; while others oppose those vices that are injurious to mankind. The venerable Polycarp prohibited the Philippians to render evil for evil

evil, railing for railing, or a curse for a curse ; and exhorted them to abstain from avarice, injustice, detraction or false witness. Ignatius also, in his epistle to the Ephesians, enjoins many virtues which were dictated by the letter and spirit of his religion. This pious Christian required men to manifest their faith by their works, to avoid dissension and to be charitable to all men. " Though, saith he, we be injured, despised and degraded ; yet let us oppose mildness to anger, humility to arrogance, prayers to curses, truth to error, and gentleness to barbarity."

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A. D. 108.

Having pointed out many happy effects which would naturally result from the Gospel, let us enquire how far it actually operated on its professors, and whether its fruits have been such as might reasonably be expected. In the discussion of this subject it will be impossible to do justice to Christianity, whose fruits must vary according to the dispositions of the disciple, and the abilities of the teacher. Much depends on the soil on which the seed of the Gospel are sowed ; and a great deal on the information, zeal and exemplary conduct of the instructor. Besides, the genuine fruits of Christianity, are gentleness, patience, benevolence, justice, temperance, purity of manners, and other virtues which are frequently exercised in private without noise or ostentation. Christianity necessarily produced good effects on myriads whose lives are not recorded in ecclesiastical history ; which like other history is for the most part, a register of the vices, the follies and the quarrels of those who made a distinguished figure in the world. It is well observed by Socrates, in the end of his ecclesiastical

Impossible  
to exhibit  
all the good  
effects of  
the Gospel

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ecclesiastical history, that if men were honest and peaceable, historians would be undone for want of materials. Individuals in private life seldom engage the attention of the historian; his object is to record the actions of princes, warriors and statesmen, whose conduct has an immediate influence on the welfare of states. "The hopes and consolations of religion," says the ingenious Paley (*b*), "its intermixture with the thoughts by day and by night, the devotion of the heart, the control of appetite, the steady direction of the will to the commands of God, are necessarily invisible; yet on these depends the virtue and the happiness of millions. Religion operates most upon those of whom history knows the least, upon fathers and mothers in their families, upon men servants and maid servants, upon the orderly tradesman, the quiet villager, the manufacturer at his loom, the husbandman in his fields. Among such its influence collectively may be of inestimable value, yet its effects in the mean time be little upon those who figure on the stage of the world." I cannot agree with Dr. Paley (*c*), that "the influence of religion is not to be sought for in the councils of princes, in the resolutions of popular assemblies, in the conduct of governments towards their subjects, or of states and sovereigns towards one another, of conquerors at the head of their armies, &c." This was my opinion in 1788, when I published the 1st volume of my history; and was Dr. Paley's opinion in 1794, when he published his evidences. But a deeper research into history con-

(*b*) Evidences, Part iii, ch. 6.(*c*) *ib.*

vinces me we were both mistaken, and that Christianity had considerable influence on the councils of princes, on the conduct of governments towards their subjects, of states towards each other, on conquerors at the head of their armies, &c. The fruits of the Gospel have been ordinary and extraordinary. The latter were its effects on princes or on persons exalted above others in piety or moral endowments; the former are a degree of charity to the poor, a share of humility, tho' perhaps affected or mixed with pride, the forgiveness of injuries, patience under afflictions, and other virtues which no historian notices; as they are daily practiced in some degree in every part of Christendom. This work is necessarily silent on the ordinary fruits of the Gospel; but exhibits many of its extraordinary effects for which alone there are materials in history. Had any ancient author made a collection of facts like the present to do credit to Christianity, we should no doubt be furnished by him and by succeeding writers on the same subject, with several instances of its happy effects which are not recorded. But as no author has done so, we are under a necessity of collecting, from a multiplicity of writers, the particular effects of the Gospel which they mention but incidentally, and without thinking of the subject of the present history.

Were there no persecutions in the early ages of Christianity, and no accusations against its professors, we should be strangers to the learning and endowments of the apologists for Christianity, and to the names and virtues of many pious and good men. Nothing can more strongly

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Defences against calumnies prove the virtues of first Christians.

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strongly evince the virtues of the first Christians, than the apologies they published against the accusations of unbelievers. These men first attempted to stop the progress of the Gospel by open assaults; but, finding such attempts fruitless, endeavoured to prevent its reception by reviling its professors and loading them with calumnies. The Christians they accused of sedition, incest, devouring infants, and other crimes contrary to the letter and spirit of their religion. When a tax was demanded of Christ, he refused not to pay it; when arraigned before Pilate, he acknowledged his authority: and the same spirit of submission to political establishments was displayed for several ages by his genuine followers, who never attempted to alter or reform the civil constitutions of any nation, and were so free from turbulence, that some have ascribed the establishment of their religion by Constantine, to their passive obedience for 300 years. Here we are enabled to overturn that dangerous position of Cardinal Bellarmin (*c*), that it is lawful to depose heretical princes; and that the primitive Christians only wanted means to attempt it on Nero, Dioclesian and Julian, who cruelly persecuted them. The Cardinal did not consider that resolute men who shewed a contempt of life in other instances, might easily have assassinated those persecutors, if they thought it agreeable to the Gospel, or if their consciences allowed them to violate the injunction of St. Paul, who advised them to obey Nero, the most cruel of tyrants. "There is an infamous report", says an Athenian philosopher (*d*) and a proselyte to the Gospel,

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(*c*) De Rom. Pontif. v. 7.(*d*) Athenagoras Legatio pro Christianis.—Vide Kortholt  
" that

“that we are guilty of Thyeſtean feaſts, or  
“feeding on murdered infants, of inceſtuous  
“copulations, and impiety towards the Gods.”

In answer to ſuch accuſations, that philoſopher  
thus proceeded in his defence. “If theſe

“charges be true, ſpare no age nor ſex, pu-  
“niſh us with our wives and children and ex-  
“tirpate us out of the world. Enquire into

“our lives, opinions, obedience to authority  
“and our concern for your perſon and govern-  
“ment. Allow us the common juſtice you

“grant your enemies, we aſk no more, we are  
“aſſured of victory.—How can we be ſuf-  
“pected of a breach of chaſtity, who think

“that to look with concupiſcence is to commit  
“adultery; and believe we ſhall be judged for  
“our very thoughts? How can we who think

“it our duty to exclude all impure thoughts,  
“be ſuppoſed guilty of actions we dare not  
“think on? We marry for procreation, and

“that but once; many remain ſingle all their  
“lives, and ſome have carried the idea of  
“chaſtity to ſuch exceſs as to emaculate

“themſelves. Do they who keep a fair for  
“all manner of lewdneſs, accuſe us of the  
“crimes they themſelves commit, and even

“aſcribe to their Gods as laudable actions?  
“Adulterers and adultereſſes accuſe us who  
“marry but once, or make eunuchs of our-

“ſelves for the kingdom of heaven’s ſake;  
“that we may have a nearer union with God.  
“None of our ſervants, from whom it is im-

“poſſible to conceal our actions, have ſeen us  
“eat human fleſh, or even falſely accuſed us of  
“any ſuch crime. How could we be ſuppoſed

“to kill children born into the world, who  
“charge women with murder that cauſe abor-  
“tion? or be capable of murdering them,

who



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.. who think it criminal to expose our children  
 " How could we embroil our hands in the  
 " blood of innocents, who abstain from the  
 " fights of the combats of gladiators with  
 " each other and with beasts, as contrary to  
 " our feelings." The Christians having been  
 charged with being useless to society, Tertul-  
 lian (e) thus replied to the charge with his  
 usual eloquence: " How can this be, when  
 " we have the same diet, habits and manner  
 " of life? We are no Brachmans or Indians  
 " Gymnosophists who live in woods, seclude  
 " ed from the world; we are sensible of our  
 " obligation to God, and despise none of  
 " the good things he bestows, tho' careful not  
 " to use them with temperance and sobriety. We  
 " make use of your markets, shambles, baths,  
 " taverns, shops, fairs and other places of so-  
 " cial intercourse. We go to sea, cultivate and  
 " improve the ground, employ ourselves in  
 " merchandize, exercise mechanic arts, and  
 " sell our manufactures like other men.—None  
 " have reason to complain that we are unpro-  
 " fitable, except bawds, panders, bullies, ruf-  
 " fians, sellers of poison, magicians, sooth-  
 " sayers, wizards and astrologers, the lucre of  
 " which men must injure the state."

Epistles of  
 Paul and  
 Peter prove  
 their con-  
 verts re-  
 formed.

Tho' it was not the object of St. Paul to  
 point out the influence of his preaching, but  
 to exhort men to virtue; yet some incidental  
 passages of his writings evince that he reformed  
 the manners of his converts and rendered them  
 ashamed of their former vices. In his epistle  
 to the Romans he thus expresses himself: *What*  
*fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now*

(e) Apolog. cap. xlii.

*ashamed?*

ashamed? for the end of these things is death——

But now being made free from sin and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life. This apostle, also

in his epistle to the Corinthians, observes that some of them were reclaimed by the Gospel.

*Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor idolaters, nor effeminate persons, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed, ye are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the spirit of our God.*

St. Peter in the following passage alludes to the reformation wrought among the Jewish converts in Pontus, Galatia and other places.

*The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles when we walked in lasciviousness, lust, excess of wine, revellings, banquettings and abominable idolatries wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot.*

Clemens Romanus, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, commends the many virtues of this people. “Who,” saith he, “did ever live

“among you that did not admire your sober and moderate piety and declare the greatness of

“your hospitality? You do all things without

“respect of persons, walking in Gods statutes,

“subject to those who rule you, giving due

“honour to your eldets. You command men

“to live honestly and soberly: women to live

“chastly and holily, loving their husbands and

“managing their household affairs with all so-

“briety. You are humble not proud, content

“with the daily bread which God supplies,

“hearing diligently his word and enlarged in

charity.

Works of  
the fathers  
prove  
Christians  
reformed.  
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"charity." It appears from the following passage of Justin Martyr that a considerable change was wrought in his time on the proselytes to the Gospel. We who formerly delighted in adultery, saith this philosopher (*f*), now observe the strictest chastity; we who used the charms of magic have devoted ourselves to the true God; and we who valued money and gain above all things now cast what we have in common, and distribute to every man according to his necessities. "Among us," says Athenagoras, "the meanest labourers and old women, tho' unable to discourse and dispute for the utility of their profession, demonstrate its excellence by their lives and good works. They do not critically weigh their words nor recite elegant orations; but manifest honest and virtuous actions. Being buffeted they strike not again, nor sue those at law who spoil or plunder them; they give liberally to those who ask and love their neighbours as themselves." "We deny not," says Tertullian (*g*), "a pledge left with us, we defile no man's marriage bed, we piously educate orphans, relieve the indigent and render to no man evil for evil.—The husband now cured of his former jealousy turns his wife and her new modesty out of his house; the father so tender of his undutiful son, whilst an Heathen, disinherits him when he becomes a Christian and obedient to his will; and the master hitherto so kind to a faithless servant disbands him on becoming religious and faithful. So much is the Christian name hated notwithstanding the advantages of the Gospel, that the husband prefers a false wife, the father a rebellious son

(*f*) Apol. ii.(*g*) Apol. cap. iii.

“ and the master a knavish servant to having  
 “ them good and virtuous Christians.” Min-  
 ucius Felix tells his adversary how much the  
 Christians surpassed the best philosophers who  
 were notoriously wicked, adulterers, tyrannical,  
 and eloquent in declaiming against the vices  
 of which they were most guilty. “ You,” saith  
 he to the Heathen, “ prohibit adultery and  
 “ practise it; we continue faithful to our wives;  
 “ you punish wickedness when committed, we  
 “ think it sinful to indulge a wicked thought—  
 “ It is with your party the prisons are crowded;  
 “ not a single Christian is there except a con-  
 “ fessor or apostate.” It has been observed (*b*)  
 of Origen that as he lived so he taught; and as  
 he taught so he lived; and surely the exemplary  
 conduct of so learned and pious a man must  
 have had considerable influence on the conduct  
 of others. “ Enquire” saith Origen (*i*), “ into  
 “ the lives of some of us; compare our former  
 “ and present mode of life, and you will find  
 “ in what impieties and impurities men were  
 “ involved before they embraced our doctrines.  
 “ But since they embraced them, how just,  
 “ grave, moderate and constant are they be-  
 “ come? yea, some are so inflamed with the  
 “ love of purity and goodness, as to abstain even  
 “ from lawful enjoyments: the Church abounds  
 “ with such men, wherever the doctrines of  
 “ Christianity prevailed. How is it possible  
 “ they can be pestilent members of society who  
 “ have converted many from the sink of vice  
 “ to the study of virtue, and a life of tempe-  
 “ rance conformable to the dictates of right  
 “ reason?——we reclaim women from im-  
 “ modesty, quarrelling with or parting from

(4) Euseb. Hist. vi. 3.

(1) Contra Celsum, Lib. 1.

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“their husbands; men from the wild extravagance of the sports and theatres, and restrain youth who are prone to vice and luxury: by painting not only the vileness of lust, but the punishment reserved for the vicious and dissolute.” “They are not Christians,” says Lactantius (*k*), “but Pagans who rob by land and commit piracy by sea, who poison their wives for their dowries or their husbands that they may marry their adulterers, who strangle or expose their infants, commit incest with their daughters, sisters, mothers or vestals, who prostitute their bodies to unnatural lusts, seek heaven by witchcraft and commit many other crimes odious to relate. Let those, says Augustine (*l*), who charge Christianity with being adverse to republics produce such seditious, such husbands, such wives, such parents, such children, such masters, such servants, such kings, such judges, such payers of debts and collectors of the revenue as this doctrine requires; and then let them dare to assert that it is hostile to the republic.

Their innocence and virtues admitted by Heathens.

Having proved the virtues of the first Christians from the testimonies of Christian writers, it may be thought necessary to produce some drawn from contemporary Heathens. Baronius (*m*) shews that the Heathen authors Julius Capitolinus and Ælius Spartianus suppressed several points which did honour to the Christians; nor could we reasonably expect from Pagans direct testimonies to the virtues of men whom they cruelly persecuted. However Heathen writers furnish sufficient proofs of their innocence and worth indirectly and incidentally. It

(*k*) v. 9.(*l*) Epist. cxxxviii.(*m*) Annal. 163.

was a common saying of the Heathens, Caius Sejus was a good man, only he was a Christian; and Polycarp, Justin and others who suffered martyrdom were accused of no crime except that of being Christians. Epagathus was put to death as the advocate of the Christians (n): and the title carried before Attalus when he was led to execution was, *this is Attalus the Christian*. Before the martyrdom of Polycarp the Jewish and Gentile inhabitants of Smyrna thus cried out, *this is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the destroyer of our gods who teacheth all men not to sacrifice nor worship them* (o). An epistle of Pliny (p) the younger, proconsul in Bithynia under Trajan to this emperor, evinces the innocence and virtues of the Christians of that province. The proconsul asks his master whether he should punish Christians for the name, tho' innocent in other respects; tells him he repeatedly asked persons brought before him whether they were Christians and persevered in the profession of the Gospel, that he threatened to correct those who persisted and enforced his threats; as they deserved to be chastized at least for their obstinacy. Some, saith he, were accused of being Christians, who as a proof of their innocence offered incense to the gods. Others, who were charged by an informer with professing Christianity, acknowledged they had formerly been Christians but renounced their error: these also worshipped your image and the images of the gods and uttered imprecations against Christ. These latter affirmed that the great crime of the Christians consisted in assembling on a certain day before light, to sing hymns unto Christ, and bound themselves by an

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(n) Euseb. v. 2. (o) Euseb. iv. 15. (p) Lib. x. Epist. xevii.

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“their husbands; men from the *x* to steal, rob, gance of the sports and the *y*. After this they youth who are prone to *z* again to take an in- painting not only th *a* simultaneously. I tried, punishment refer *b* truth by the torture of “solute.” “T *c* were present at their worship; Lactantius (*k*) except an obstinate kind of “and corr *d* turned to excess. We find other “wives *e* pagan testimonies of their innocence “the *f* of succeeding emperors. Seren- “ *g* Gracchus, Adrians proconsul in Asia, re- presented to this emperor the injustice of putting Christians to death when no crime was proved against them (*g*); and Antoninus Pius Adrians successor was so fully persuaded of their innocence and of the injustice done them, that he charged the commons of Asia with accusing them of crimes which they could not prove (*h*). Many persons, says this Heathen emperor, have consulted me relative to the Christians; and I have acquainted them all that if any one accuses a Christian merely on account of his religion, the accused person shall be acquitted and the accuser punished (*i*). But in the succeeding reign this degree of lenity was withdrawn by M. Antoninus the philosopher, who put to death in Gaul those who refused to practise Heathen rites; tho’ they had not been guilty of any other crime (*j*). In a course of time their perseverance in virtue prevailed so far that Julian (*u*) the Apostate, in an epistle to Arfacius an Heathen pontiff, recommended the charities and other virtues of the Christians to the imitation of the Pagans. This emperor desired Arfacius to turn his eyes to the means

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(*g*) Euseb. Hist. iv. 9. (*h*) Euseb. iv. 3. & Just. Mart. Apol. ii. (*i*) Just. Mart. Apol. i. (*j*) Clerici. Hist. Eccl. A. D. 167. Sect. 15. (*u*) Epist. ixl.

whereby

whereby the superstition of the Christians was propagated; by sanctity of life, by kindness to strangers and by the attention they paid to the burial of the dead. He recommends an imitation of their virtues, exhorts the pontiff to prevail on the priests of Galatia to attend to the worship of the gods; enjoins works of charity, and desires him to relieve the distressed and to build houses for the accomodation of strangers of whatever religion. It is, saith he, a disgrace to the Pagans to disregard those of their own religion; while Christians do kind offices to strangers and enemies. Whence it appears that the Christians were improved in benevolence and morals by the Gospel; and even the Heathens improved by the example of the Christians. Such were the principal testimonies of the Heathens concerning the innocence and virtues of the primitive Christians; and we find those testimonies corroborated by various other proofs which shall be exhibited in the following pages.

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With respect to Christianity in general we may observe that it abolished or abated the worship of cruel, impure or vindictive deities and several superstitions far less offensive than those introduced by its teachers. It is generally imagined that its happy effects were confined almost to the first ages of the Church and extended little further; but the following pages will prove this opinion to be founded on ignorance or prejudice. As soon as Christianity became the established religion of states and the clergy powerful, many of them employed their influence in checking every impure or cruel act, fornication, adultery, licentious divorces, infanticide, the fights of gladiators, duels, the violence of war and the vices of kings. The

General  
effects of  
Christian-



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Gospel and its teachers promoted charitable institutions, emancipated slaves, abated the rigours of servitude, redeemed captives, improved the condition of females, protected widows and orphans against injustice, orphan princes against usurpers and rebellious subjects, subjects against exaction and oppression, the weak against the powerful in suits at law, the goods and persons of the shipwrecked against plunderers and every description of afflicted persons against the distress which overwhelmed them. It not only lessened revenge, pride, suicide, human sacrifices and other crimes of polished Heathens; but discouraged and abated many evils almost peculiar to Barbarians, namely, ferocity of manners, hardness and coldness of heart, a love of rapine and of piracy, ignorance of letters, of arts, of agriculture and of several comforts and conveniencies well known to the civilized. To Christianity and its teachers the scholar is indebted for books, the weak or deformed for life, the distressed man for relief, the afflicted for consolation, the servant for liberty or tender treatment, the husband for an exemption from the brawls of jealous wives, the wife for the entire and undivided regard of her husband as well as for protection against his cruelty and profligacy, the weak for patronage against the powerful in suits at law, various kingdoms for merciful codes, and many polished nations for arts, agriculture and civilization. The man of erudition must respect Christianity and its teachers for disseminating and preserving literature, the well informed lawyer for improving the laws of various countries, the benevolent man for encouraging charity, masters, mistresses and children for promoting domestic concord, the honest man for discouraging theft and

and robbery, and every man of intellect or information for the numerous advantages it has produced, and for preventing relapses to barbarism, ignorance and vicious practices. None have just cause for aspersing, reviling or deriding the Gospel but assassins, fornicators or adulterers, the unjust or unmerciful, the proud or vindictive, the narrow-hearted and uncharitable whom it severely threatens and excludes from its rewards. The deistical book-worm should know that he is indebted for books to Christianity and its teachers who preserved the valuable treasures of ancient literature. The female whose husband was convicted of adultery must know that he would not have treated her thus had he been a good Christian: She should be told for her comfort, were it not for the Gospel your husband might have several wives and your state would be wretched with them and their children. One might tell a deist who was divorced from an adulterous wife, she would have been faithful had she not despised the promises and threats of religion. The deistical brawler for liberty instead of reviling the Gospel ought to be enamoured of it; for having emancipated slaves and for abating the rigours of slavery in those who continued in a state of servitude. The feeble or deformed deist instead of aspersing Christianity ought to admire and revere it; for preserving him in his infancy from being strangled, drowned or exposed as was usual among the Heathens. The unbeliever who had been robbed by his servant should be told, "had the fellow been a sincere Christian your money would be safe." The deistical friend of a suicide should be told, he would not have acted thus had he the aid of religion to support him under his afflictions. The following his-

tory

CHAP. III. tory would furnish many observations of this kind on almost every evil that can occur in society. We now proceed to *prove* and *illustrate* these points.

Christianity and its teachers diffused and preserved literature.

Christianity has been instrumental in diffusing and preserving moral and classical knowledge in every nation in which it was established. The law, the Gospel, the first comments on them and the works of the fathers were written in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin; which rendered a knowledge of these three languages indispensably necessary to every man who wished to be an intelligent Christian. Christianity being contained in books, the use of letters became necessary to its teachers; nor could learning have been entirely lost while there was an order of men who were obliged to possess a moderate share of it, to qualify them for the priesthood, and to entitle them to its emoluments. In Tacitus's (w) time, the German nations were strangers to letters; and the two following facts prove that other nations were likely to continue illiterate had not the teachers of the Gospel exerted themselves for their instruction. The Scythians, having made themselves masters of Athens, brought together into one heap all the books they found there; and would have consumed the valuable treasure, did not one of them tell his companions, that while the Greeks amused themselves with those, they neglected the art of war and were easily overcome (x). Theodoric a Gothic prince would not suffer the children of his subjects to be instructed in the sciences; imagining that

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270.

(w) De moribus Germ. (x) Zonaras Annal. xii: 26.

such instruction enervated the mind, rendered men unfit for martial exploits and that the boy who trembled at the rod, would never look undaunted at a sword or spear (y). But no sooner was Christianity propogated among barbarians; than they were instructed in the use of letters: *ubi pietati ibi musis locus*, piety and the muses resided together in the schools. Ulphilas, a Gothic bishop, invented letters for his illiterate countrymen, translated the bible into the vulgar tongue for their use, and instructed them in its doctrines. He did not translate the books of Kings, which he thought unfit for the Goths who were already too prone to war and violence (z). Some Goths soon became so well informed, that they compared their version with the Latin, the Greek and the Hebrew originals. Sunnia and Fretila, two Gothic divines having consulted Jerome about certain passages of the psalms, where the Latin translation differed from the Greek; he expressed himself as follows: "Who would believe that the barbarous Getæ should seek for truth from the Hebrew tongue, or that the Germans should seek for the elquence of the holy spirit; while the Greeks were engaged in idle contention? That the hand long callous with the sword or bow should apply to the pen, or that ferocious hearts should turn to Christian mildness? Now is the prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled, they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks (a)." Ansgarius, the chief apostle of

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840.

(y) Procop. de Bello Goth. Lib. 1, cap. 26.

(z) Socrat. iv. 32. Sozom. vi. 36. Philostorg. ii. 5.

(a) Hierom. Opuſc. vol. 2. p. 626; Edit. Paris, 1706.

(d) Mabill. Annal. 826.

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the northern nations, not only preached the Gospel to those barbarians, but established schools for the instruction of youth in religion and letters. Cyril (*c*) and Methodus, who converted the Bulgarians, Moravians and Bohemians about the same time, previously invented the Slavic alphabet and translated the Bible and some Greek and Latin authors into the Slavic tongue; for the purpose of expanding their narrow minds and softening their hard hearts to pity and mildness. Nearly the same may be said of other barbarians who became profelytes to the Gospel. In Russia, the teachers of Christianity recommended at the same time the Gospel and letters, the rudiments of the arts, of law and order; and were seconded in their exertions by religious princes who employed skilful Greeks, for the decoration of the cities, and for the instruction of the people. "The dome and paintings of the famous cathedral of St. Sophia at Constantinople, were rudely copied in the Russian churches; the writings of the fathers were translated into the Sclavonian language, and 300 noble youths were invited or compelled to attend lectures in the college of Jarislau (*d*)". But when a love of literature was succeeded by a love of arms, few had inducements to study except men educated for the clerical profession; nor could a knowledge of the Greek and Roman classics have been propagated so universally as it was, had not the clergy found them necessary for understanding the scriptures and the works of the fathers. By this means, churchmen possessed most of the learning of those times, and handed it

(*c*) Balbini Miscel. pars 1. (*d*) Gibbon, Hist. ch. 1.

down to their successors, who had the merit of collecting, transcribing and preserving books which otherwise must have perished, when a taste for erudition was almost extinct, and the passion of laymen was directed to arms. In short the diffusion and preservation of literature are to be ascribed to the Gospel, to its teachers and to ecclesiastical establishments for the maintenance of the clergy. Had there not been such establishments, teachers would soon degenerate; as few would sacrifice time and expence in colleges, on the bare prospect of being assistants to or even masters of schools. If instructors of youth grow ignorant a proportionable ignorance must soon prevail among their pupils; and we may easily judge of the consequences. Were an ignorant laity freely to indulge their fancies on religious subjects unassisted and uncontrouled by the learned, a nation might be stocked with fanatics and rebels; if they submit implicitly to ignorant guides without enquiry, they might become dupes and slaves to impostors and tyrants. Surely the friend of literature should not be adverse to the Gospel and its teachers who preserved all the ancient authors that are now in existence!

If we compare the condition of mankind before and after the promulgation of the Gospel, we shall find it improved its converts in virtue and happiness. At Christ's appearance the Jews were extremely illiberal and regarded all who differed from them in religion, as impure, profane and despicable. O Lord, says the Jew in *Eldras* (e), *thou madest the world*

It abated  
illiberal  
prejudices.

(e) in *Eldras*,

for

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for our sake; as for the other people who came out of Adam, thou hast said they are nothing, but be like unto spittle, and hast likened them to a drop that falleth from a vessel. According to St. Luke (f), it was unlawful for a Jew to keep company with or come unto one of another nation. The Jews would not eat with the Samaritans, a sect of the Hebrews, nor converse with them familiarly, nor accept from them the smallest compliment even of a drop of water (g). An Heathen writer charges the Jews with not pointing out his way to the traveller, nor a spring to the thirsty man unless he was of their religion.

*Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti,  
Quæstum ad fontem solum deducere verpum.*

St. Peter would not enter the house of Cornelius a Gentile, but in obedience to a divine command conveyed to him in a vision. This vision and the gift of the Holy Ghost to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, were intended to combat such erroneous opinions and narrow prejudices; and had the desired effect on St. Peter and on his converts. In consequence of that vision, the apostle opened his mouth and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him. When the miraculous gift of tongues was imparted to the Heathens as well as to the Jews, Peter answered and said, can any man forbid water that these should not be baptised who received the Holy Ghost as well as we? The Jewish converts censured St. Peter

(f) Acts, x. (g) John iv. 9. (h) Juven Sat. xiv.

for eating with the Gentiles; and when in his own vindication he related the circumstance of the vision, the Jewish Christians filled with the Christian spirit of universal benevolence *cried out, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life (i)*. Such was the happy change wrought by the Gospel on the sentiments of this narrow-mined, illiberal and prejudiced people! The change was perceptible in the time of Justin martyr (*k*), who thus expresses himself: "We who hated each other and refused to associate with persons of a different tribe, now converse together familiarly since the coming of Christ." The benevolent doctrines of the Gospel served as a bond of union between independent nations, broke the partition which separated the Heathens and Hebrews, abated their prejudices, and rendered them more liberal in their conduct to each other.

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Among the ancients, pride and vanity multiplied kings. The Amorites had five, thirty-one fought against Joshua, thirty-two against Benhadad and we read of seventy in the time of the Judges. Almost every part of ancient Greece was parcelled out into regal districts; there were ten kings in Thessaly and six in Peloponesus in Homer's time. On the decline of the Roman empire pride and servility prevailed to such a degree among the Heathens, that the emperors claimed and received the most blasphemous titles. To flatter the vanity of Augustus, Virgil (*l*) divided the empire between him and Jupiter; and Lucan (*m*), to gratify the pride of Nero, considered all the outrages

It checked  
pride and  
promoted  
humility.

(i) Acts x. (k) Apol. ii. (l) His Life. (m) Pharr: Lib. i.  
committed



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committed in the civil wars as beneficial, having been preparatory to his accession to the throne. Temples were built in honour of Augustus; and Caligula erected a temple and golden statue to himself, instituted sacrifices and appointed priests to officiate in the service (*n*). So impious and vain was Domitian that he published his edicts with this preamble, our Lord and God so commands it; and required these titles when men wrote or spoke of him (*o*). If we compare the sentiments and conduct of those Heathens with the opinions and actions of some religious men among the Jews and Christians, the contrast must appear striking. The old and new testament abound with passages tending to humble the proud and to teach them their own littleness and dependancy on God. In the former we are told that the *Lord maketh poor and maketh rich, bringeth low and lifteth up, he raiseth the poor out of the dust and lifteth up the beggar from the dungbill to set him among princes*. King David called himself a servant of servants, and thus expressed himself on another occasion. *Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and earth is thine, both riches and power come of thee, thou reignest over all and in thine hand is power and might*. In the new testament we are told that *God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble; that he who exalteth himself shall be abased and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted*. Our Saviour was a pattern of humility, and left us an example that we should follow his steps: nor can it be denied that his example had considerable influence on his sincere followers. Clemens Romanus com-

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(*n*) Sueton. (*o*) Sueton. in Domit cap. xlii. & Orosius vii. re-  
mends

mends the humble spirit of the Corinthians, represents them as free from vanity, and subject to others rather than subjecting others to them. After they had fallen into a little faction, he exhorted them to lay aside all haughtiness, not to glory in wisdom, strength or riches; but to follow the example of Christ who was so humble as to endure every evil tho' able to do whatever he pleased. So efficacious was Christianity in repressing vanity and humbling its professors, that some of them rejected the crown of martyrdom and would not suffer men to call them martyrs (*p*). Constantine the first Christian emperor, tho' in some points little influenced by the Gospel, performed many acts in compliance with his religion and with the injunctions of its teachers. He refused honours which had been accepted by his predecessors, and even distributed thro' the provinces various medals of himself in an humble attitude of Christian devotion (*q*). This emperor, having been told of his happiness in getting to the summit of power in this world, and of his well founded expectation of future felicity, rebuked the flatterer and desired men to pray to God that he may be a worthy servant of his heavenly master both in this world and in that which is to come (*r*). We have a shining pattern of charity as well as humility in the empress Placilla, the wife of Theodosius the great, who attended the sick in the hospitals with her own hands. Some of her courtiers having condemned her condescension she answered, to distribute gold became the emperor; but for her part she thought it her duty to do this for God who

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(*p*) See *Caves Primitive Christianity*, Part ii. (*q*) Vido  
Keyblers *Antiq. Septent.* p. 399. (*r*) Baroa. *Annal.* 336.

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to rejoice at the misfortunes of enemies. Aristotle (*b*) called patience under afflictions the virtue of a slave; and Tully (*c*) observes that a good man injures no person, unless instigated by ill usage. Augustus (*d*), having revenged Cesar's death at Phillipi, erected a temple to Mars Ultor; and the amiable Germanicus (*e*) exhorted his friends to be revenged of those who poisoned or bewitched him. We admit that Plato, Epictetus and a few others argued against the return of injuries; but a learned writer (*f*) has proved their arguments to be in some respects false, and their inducements to forgiveness feeble, when compared to those proposed by the Gospel. It would be difficult to point out any motive to the practice of this virtue so strong as that which Christianity offers, namely that we can expect no pardon of our own offences, if we prosecute our revenge against those who injured us. Christ said of his murderers, *father forgive them, for they know not what they do*: and when St. Stephen was stoned, he kneeled down and said, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*. The christian principle of forgiveness is also forcibly inculcated in the writings of the apostolical fathers, especially Polycarp and Ignatius (*g*). "Not rendering," saith Polycarp, "evil for evil, railing for railing, striking for striking or cursing for cursing. Be ye mild at their anger," saith Ignatius, "humble at their boastings; to their blasphemies return your prayers, to their errors your firmness in the faith. When they are cruel, be ye gentle, not endeavouring to

(*b*) Ethics iv. 11. (*c*) De officiis Lib. i. cap. 7. & Lib. iii. cap. 19. (*d*) Sueton. & Ovid Fasti. Lib. vi. v. 606.

(*e*) Tacit. Annal. ii. 72. (*f*) Leland's Christian

(*g*) Wakes Apostolical Fathers;

imitate their ways: be their brethren in all kindness, followers of the Lord who was more unjustly used, more destitute, more despised than any person." The real Christian does not harbour a vindictive spirit towards his neighbour; from the example of Christ and his immediate followers: he knows it must be a barrier to the forgiveness of his own offences, and prevent him from repeating the Lord's prayer in his devotions. It appears from Tertullian (*b*), that the Christians of his time not only dropped their resentment towards those who injured them, but did them kind offices; with a liberality unknown before the Gospel was promulgated. All men, saith he, love their friends; but it is peculiar to Christians to love their enemies, to return kindness for hatred, and to pray that their enemies may obtain forgiveness from God. Paulus (*i*) a Christian, who was brought to the block to be executed for an inflexible adherence to his religion, requested a little time to collect himself: his request having been complied with, he prayed aloud unto God to convert nations wallowing in ignorance, to forgive the silly multitude who insulted him, the emperor under whom he was persecuted, the judge who passed sentence on him and the executioner who was ready to strike off his head. The hard-hearted multitude were so mollified by his pious address that they sobbed and wept; especially when they saw him at the conclusion of his prayer laying his head on the block to be severed from his body. Christianity had considerable influence on the sentiments and actions of the emperor Theodosius the younger in various respects. He was well versed in Scrip-

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(*b*) Ad Scapulam.

(*i*) Euseb. Hist. viii. 26.

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ture, fasted twice a week and was fond of singing psalms: and his piety and devotion produced beneficial effects. He was distinguished for clemency, discouraged cruel spectacles, and learned to bridle his anger, to endure grief patiently and to revenge none who injured him (*k*). In every age of the Church there have been instances of forgiveness on Gospel principles; and none perhaps more remarkable than the following. John, Patriarch of Alexandria and commonly called John the Almoner, applied Scripture happily in reconciling differences and abating revenge. Having laboured in vain to persuade a man of quality in his diocese, to be reconciled to one who had injured him; he invited the former to hear prayers in his Chapel, where none was present except himself and the Clerk. When they came to the Lord's prayer and pronounced the words *forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*, the bishop turned to him and desired him to reflect on what he asked of God, and how he promised to forgive those who offended him as an inducement to God to treat him with the like compassion. Having heard these words he threw himself at the bishop's feet and declared his readiness to follow his directions and to be reconciled to his enemy (*l*). The following is an instance of that charity and forgiveness which the bishop recommended to others. Some malicious persons having bred a quarrel between him and Nicetas governor of Alexandria; the bishop sent to his misinformed friend in the evening to acquaint him that the Sun was almost set. This message having reminded the governor of the Gospel precept of reconciliation; he hastened to the

(*k*) Socrat: vii. 22(*l*) Baron: Annal. 610.

archiepiscopal

archiepiscopal palace where his overture was joyfully received by the bishop who advised him to shut his ears against busy informers, and never to form a judgment until he heard both sides. Out of many other examples of this virtue which may be produced, the author has chosen the following to close this subject. Certain persons having cursed Lewis the 9th of France for rigorously punishing a blasphemer, the king was advised to punish them also; but the pious king refused to do so and said, he freely pardoned them because they only offended himself (\*).

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Fornication was allowed in all Heathen nations; nor can this be a matter of surprize when this vice was supposed to have been practised by the Gods, and required by the religious rites of many kingdoms. In the Gentile world some deemed fornication disgraceful in females, but not in the males; while that vice is condemned by the Gospel and by the laws of its professors. The Heathens were total strangers to the purity recommended by the Gospel, which expressly forbids that vice, and acquaints us that whoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Its letter and spirit improved the laws of all christian kingdoms; in respect to purity, mercy and other particulars. The first Christian princes paid extraordinary attention to purity of manners among their subjects. Constantine built a Church at Heliopolis where a temple of Venus stood, overturned another temple of her's at mount Lebanon, and abolished the impure rites practised in those places. The laws of

It discour-  
aged licen-  
sed fornica-  
tion.

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(\*) Joinville & Math: Paris,

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337 this prince forbid Christian females to be put  
 379 into brothels, and discourages other crimes too  
 408 shocking to relate. The emperor Constantius  
 537 encouraged the redemption of females from the  
 560 stews; and the laws of Theodosius the great,  
 Theodosius the younger, Justinian, Receswin-  
 thus and other religious princes threaten the  
 keepers of infamous houses with heavy penal-  
 ties (*n*). According to a law of Receswinthus, a  
 religious king of the Visigoths, the woman who  
 kept a brothel in a city was condemned to re-  
 ceive 300 lashes, and suffered to go into exile;  
 provided she promised never to return to her  
 illicit practices. If she relapsed or returned,  
 she was lashed as before, delivered as a slave  
 to some poor person and never suffered to ap-  
 pear abroad in the city (*o*). It will appear in  
 the sequel that Christianity was productive of  
 extraordinary degrees of chastity and purity  
 both before and after the promulgation of the  
 laws just alluded to.

It discour-  
 aged po-  
 lygamy.

179 Bardesanes (*p*) the famous Syrian heretic  
 observed that the Christian code was extreme-  
 ly useful to mankind: since its professors re-  
 tained the virtues and rejected the vices of the  
 different nations where it was promulgated.  
 “ In Parthia,” saith he, “ where polygamy  
 “ prevailed, they are not polygamists; in Per-  
 “ sia they do not marry their own daughters;  
 “ in Bactria and Gaul they do not violate the  
 “ marriage bed; nor do they wherever they  
 “ reside yield to the influence of the corrupt

(*n*) Socrat. i. 18, v. 18. Theod. Novell. xviii. de lenonibus  
 Novell. Collat. iii, Tit. i. Hieron. in Esai. Lib. ii, cap. 2.

(*o*) Lindenbrog. Lex Wisig. Lib. iii, Tit. iv.

(*p*) Euseb. Præp. Evang. vi, 10.

" laws and wicked customs which are familiar  
" to others." Christianity has rendered the  
domestic state much happier in all countries  
which embraced it. It abolished polygamy, a  
practice repugnant to the intention of our Cre-  
ator, who at first made one male and one fe-  
male for social comfort and the propagation of  
the species. These ends are not answered by a  
plurality of wives; for if one man has many  
wives, several men can have none, from the e-  
quality of males and females born into the  
world. Montesquieu (*q*) allows that the cli-  
mate of some Asiatic countries seems favoura-  
ble to polygamy; but condemns the practice  
as an inlet to unnatural crimes, a source of dis-  
cord, and unserviceable to parents, to children  
and to human kind. In consequence of that  
practice, mutual jealousies must subsist between  
the wives and children; and partialities which  
are unavoidable, must be a constant source of  
strife and discontent. Socrates who had two  
wives, was justly punished for countenancing  
so mischievous an usage. To his former wife  
Xantippe he took another called Myrto; and  
thus had two scolds instead of one to exercise  
his patience. For while they disagreed they  
were continually scolding or fighting each o-  
ther; and while they agreed they brawled at  
him; and often attacked him with their fists as  
well as with their tongues (*r*). Euripides (*s*)  
the poet was coupled to two noisy vixens;  
who so plagued him with their jealousies and  
quarrels that he became a professed woman-ha-  
ter. For these and perhaps weightier reasons,  
the Gospel prohibits polygamy; and the first

(*q*) Spirit of Laws, xxi: 2, 6. (*r*) Diog. Laert.

(*s*) Aul. Gel. xv. 20.



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Christians, who understood the spirit of their religion better than the author of the Thelyphthora, condemned a practice so destructive of the happiness of individuals of both sexes.

It discour-  
aged adul-  
tery and  
licentious  
divorces

Adultery was allowed by the religion, the laws and usages of some Heathen states. Gentiles inclined to the crime were encouraged by the example of Jupiter, and even by some of the wisest lawgivers. In some cases it was permitted by Lycurgus (r), and by the laws and customs of the Sicilians, Bactrians, Tyrrhenians, Thracians, and other Gentile nations (u). Not only adultery but licentious divorces were common at Christ's appearance. Moses permitted divorces in some cases on account of the stubbornness of his people; but in process of time the Jews solicited and obtained them on the most trifling occasions (w). Heathen lawgivers also allowed divorces on the most frivolous pretences; tho' with few bad effects while rigid morals lasted in their republics. But when luxury had corrupted men, the inconvenience of this practice must have been sensibly felt. Where separations were easily obtained, neither husband nor wife were anxious to please each other; nor could parents who were likely to separate, unite cordially in the education of their children. This abuse was grown so insupportable at Christ's appearance, that he absolutely prohibited divorces except for the cause of adultery: which prohibition was afterwards repeated in the acts of councils, and in the laws of all nations which embraced the

(r) Plut. (u) Euseb. ib. Stobæi Serm. cixlv. Strabo lib. xi, p. 513, & Lib. xvi, p. 775. Edit. Paris, 1620. Diod. Sic.

(w) Joseph. Antiq. iv. 8. Philo de Leg. Præcep. vi.

Gospel. Religion is the most effectual restraint on adultery; as it is forbidden by God who sees the most secret actions: while the irreligious will not hesitate to commit this crime, where they expect to elude the vigilance of the witness or the penalties of the law. Who can commiserate the deistical cuckold who asperges that religion which would prevent his disgrace; if duly inculcated on the heart of his wife? Christianity condemns adultery and licentious divorces; and its teachers in many instances, have not spared even princes who were guilty of those crimes. Charibert king of Neustria, having disbanded his wife and married one of her servants; the pastoral zeal of Germanus, arch-bishop of Paris, did not suffer him to acquiesce in the scandalous marriage. The pious prelate remonstrated to the king with becoming freedom; but finding his remonstrances vain, excommunicated both him and the accomplice in his guilt (\*). Another instance of opposition to the vices of a king, occurs in the 8th century, when bishop Lambertus reprov'd Pepin Heristallus for marrying Alpaïs while his wife was alive. He was put to death for his constancy in maintaining his opinion; but his fate did not prevent the bishops Suuibertus and Agiolphus from remonstrating against his resignation of his crown to Martel the bastard of that marriage, in exclusion of the lawful heir (y). A third instance of fruitless opposition to the debaucheries of princes was in Ivo bishop of Chartres, who submitted to be deprived of his bishopric and reduced almost to beggary, rather than consent to an

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(\*) Greg. Turon. Hist. France, iv. 26.

(y) Thomassinus, vol. ii, p. 757.

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alulterous marriage of king Philip to another man's wife, while his own was alive. "On account of the conscience I ought to have towards God," says this pious prelate, "and the good fame a priest of Christ ought to possess, I would rather be flung into the sea with a mill stone about my neck than do any thing that would hurt weak minds. Nor do I speak as a disloyal man, but highly loyal; since you are not only injuring your salvation, but endangering your crown." This remonstrance exposed him to a persecution in which he gloried with modesty and firmness. When seized on and deprived of his bishopric, he would not suffer the people to rescue him; having resolved not to obtain liberty or life by the blood of a multitude (a). In each of these instances the clergy failed in reforming the debaucheries of princes; but still their efforts tended to prevent similar offences and the evil effects of vicious examples. A silent acquiescence in the crimes of a king must have led his subjects to despise the instructions of the clergy, who rebuked the people for vices which they connived at in a prince. However they were more successful in other instances. Dagobert I. committed many crimes which gave scandal in France. He disbanded his wife, took in her place three concubines, oppressed his subjects to support his extravagance, and banished Amandus an amiable bishop who dared to reprove him for his crimes. But he soon repented of his misconduct, recalled the bishop and assured him he would for the future follow his advice (b). This instance of reformation must have been useful to the

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(a) Ib. p. 761.

(b) Baron. Annal. 632, 639.

nation, and to a religion which inspired the king with a sense of his transgressions. Bishops were active in restraining the debaucheries of kings in other nations. Boniface bishop of Rome exhorted Athelbald king of the Angles to good works, encouraged him to alms-giving, declared him the protector of widows and orphans, the discourager of perjury and rapine; but lamented his disregard of the marriage bed as an evident violation of the divine law (c). *Do you not know, saith he, that you are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy which temple ye are. And again, Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, &c. shall inherit the kingdom of God.* Surely this exhortation was likely to have some influence on the sentiments or conduct of this prince! A synod held in Ireland about the same time prohibited any communication with an adulterer or adultress, forbid men to live in the same house, to eat at the same table, or even to converse with them, until they did penance for seven years, for three of them strictly (d): which prohibition and penances must have been powerful preventives of the crime of adultery. Some patriarchs and bishops of the Greek church also acted with fortitude towards the favourites of princes, and even towards princes themselves. In the 8th century the patriarch Ignatius excluded from the church Barda Cesar a favourite of the emperor Michael; for disbanding his wife and marrying another woman: and Polieuctus another patriarch forbid the emperor Zimisius to enter a

(c) ib. 443. (d) Drasbery Spiegel. Lib. xiv. cap. II. 32.

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church, until he cleared himself of a suspicion of murder, and banished from his palace the supposed murderer (e). Such a conduct in bishops tended to restrain the irregularity of subjects, who could have expected no indulgence for their vices, while the clergy were so severe on those of a prince. The wives of Heathen princes had no such protection against the infidelity of their husbands! In England also some monks and ecclesiastics discouraged the debaucheries of princes in various instances. Dunstan abbot of Glastonbury reproved king Edwyn for incest; which so provoked the king that he deprived his monastery of its revenues, and banished him from the kingdom. Yet when Dunstan was recalled by Edgar and appointed to the arch-bishopric of Canterbury, he was not afraid to dissolve an incestuous marriage of a nobleman, nor to reprove even this king who defiled a virgin. Having heard of this outrage, he represented to the king the heinousness of the crime, and so terrified him by threats of the divine vengeance, that he acknowledged his transgression and submitted to do penance; which consisted in not wearing his crown for seven years, in fasting twice a week, in giving alms (f), &c. The king performed the penance with exactness during that time, to the great discouragement of rapes and impurity in England. Gregory the 7th wrote to Lanfranc arch-bishop of Canterbury, to prevent as far as possible the odious practice of disbanding men's wives and even selling them; which was common among the Scots: and we may be sure the pious Lanfranc exerted himself on the occasion. For in a few years

(e) Thomassin, vol. ii. p. 758. (f) Thomassin, vol. ii. p. 757.

after

after he wrote to the king of Ireland to preserve the faith, to exhibit works suitable to it, to be gentle to the humble, and not to suffer his subjects to dismiss their wives or exchange them with others (g). These are perhaps the most remarkable instances in which the bishops interposed for the prevention of adultery, jealousy and the various evils which attend them: no man dared to have taken such liberties with Heathen princes, in behalf of their injured wives who had no redress from the cruelty of their husbands! Since then the bishops reproved kings who had power to punish them, and who often exercised that power; we may reasonably conclude they shewed little indulgence to their dissolute subjects from whom they had not any thing to apprehend. Surely then a religion which checked adultery, licentious divorces and the despotism of husbands is well entitled to the regard of the rational part of mankind!

The history of almost every Heathen nation evinces that Paganism was productive of human sacrifices not only in barbarous countries, but in Greece, Rome and other civilized states. A learned writer (b) has proved from ancient authors, that the Canaanites, Moabites, Phœnicians, Egyptians, Arabians, Persians, Tyrians, Phrygians, Lydians, Trojans, Scythians, Gauls, Germans, Thacians, Athenians, Spartans, Thebans, Arcadians, Corinthians, Cyprians, Chians, Romans and other ancient nations offered human victims; and that most of them were prompted to such cruelties by false religion. Those different nations committed

It discouraged human sacrifices.

(g) Baron. Annal. 1070.

(b) *Genus de victimis humanis.*

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this horrid crime to appease the gods, to recover health, to drive away famine, to remedy the sterility of grounds, to stop inundations, to avert storms, to obtain success in war, in ratifying treaties, forming conspiracies, compounding philtres and in magical rites in honour of the devil. Lucretius (*i*) was prompted by bloody offerings so common in ancient times, and by ignorance of true religion, to confound superstition and rational worship and to impute to the latter the effects of the former. The sacrifice of Iphigenia at the port of Aulis led the poet into this confusion of ideas and to impute to religion the fruits of superstition.

————— *Sæpius olim*

*Religio peperit scelerosa atque impia facta.*

Often in ancient times was religion productive of wicked and impious acts.

And again,

*Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum.*

To so much evil religion could persuade.

The Heathens committed numerous acts of cruelty which the curious reader may find collected in the learned work of Geusius which has been cited above. Such acts of cruelty were exploded by the spirit of the Gospel, and soon abolished by the professors of it: we defy the unbeliever to point out the instance in which the Gentile philosophy abolished such practices in the Heathen world! Human sacrifices, we allow, ceased in some places without the aid of the Gospel; but maintain that the cruel practice continued in civilized nations at least to the

(i) Lib: 1. verse 84 & 100.

middle of the 3d century. Plutarch (*k*) speaks of it as existing in his own time; Porphyry (*l*) mentions it as subsisting in the 3d century; and Procopius (*m*) accused the Gauls of this crime after they became Christians. This accusation proves the difficulty of abolishing this hideous practice, and the expediency of a humane system to remove or abate it.

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98  
270  
537

In many Heathen nations it was allowed to destroy the foetus in the womb, to strangle or drown new born infants, or to expose them on the sea shore or in some corner, where they were left to perish by cold or hunger or to be destroyed by wild beasts. The custom of exposing infants or sacrificing them prevailed among the Egyptians, Latins, Greeks, Romans and other ancient nations. Moses and Romulus were exposed in Egypt and Latium; and Lycurgus (*n*) directed that all infants pronounced deformed or defective should be flung into a pit at the foot of mount Taygetus. Some Greek states allowed the killing or exposing of infants; and where exposing infants was not permitted, mothers might procure abortion lest their children should be too numerous (*o*). The following lines of Posidippus (*p*) prove that certain Greek states did not scruple to expose their female children.

It checked  
the murder  
of children

Ἦτοι τρεφεῖ τις, καὶ πικρὴ τις ἀντυχῇ  
Θυγατέρα δ' ἀποθῆσι, καὶ ἡ πλεῖστος.

*A man tho' poor will not expose a son; but if he is rich, he will scarcely preserve a daughter. A*

(*k*) In Marcello. & Rom: quaestiones, vol. ii, p. 283 Edit: Frankf: 1625.

(*l*) De abstinencia Lib: ii.

(*m*) De

Bello Goth; ii, 25

(*n*) Plut:

(*o*) Arist: Polit: vii. 16.

(*p*) Stobaei Sent: Graecae Sermon: cxxvi. p. 452 Edit: Genev: 1609.



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law of Romulus (q) required parents to rear all their males and eldest females, and forbade them to put to death well formed children until they were three years old: but authorised them to expose maimed or deformed children with the consent and approbation of their five nearest relations. It appears from Terence, Plautus, Suetonius and other writers that the Heathens retained for a time the custom of exposing or killing their children. In Calligula's reign (r) the exposure of children was a common crime; and in Trajan's, Tacitus (s) thought it extraordinary that the Germans did not murder any of their children. This crime was so common in the reigns of the Antonines, that their contemporary (t) represents a man going a journey coolly directing his wife to kill the child she bore, if it was a female. This crime, so contrary to nature and to the spirit of Christianity, was prohibited by its first preachers, by the canons of the first councils, by the writings of the fathers and by the first Christian emperors. Constantine the great directed the officers of his revenue to receive and educate at his expence the children of such parents as were unable to provide for them; and to maintain the parents themselves with corn out of the public granaries: but gave orders that a cruel father should be drowned with a dog, a cock, a viper and an ape sewed up with him in a bag (w). These regulations restrained the detestable custom; but it continued in some instances until the end of

(q) Dion: Hallicarn. Lib. ii. p. 85 Edit: Oxon:

(r) Philo Jud: de legibus Specialibus p. 794 Edit: Paris 1640.

(s) De Moribus Germ: cap. xix.

(t) Apul: Metam: Lib: x. p. 227.

(w) Vide Bynkershoek de jure occidendi &amp; exponendi liberos apud veteres Romanos: &amp; No xdt de partus expositione &amp; necandis apud veteres: the former of which books the author has not seen;

the 4th century when the Christian emperors Valentinian, Valens and Gratian entirely suppressed it (x). Chindaswinthus (y) a pious king of the Visigoths observes in the preamble to one of his laws, that destroying children in the mother's womb or after they were born was common in the provinces, and denounced several penalties on the authors of those crimes. Hence the Christian institution well deserves the regard of those individuals who otherwise would have fallen sacrifices to deformity or weakness; and also the public regard, by preserving many deformed or feeble men who have been highly useful or ornamental to society.

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Heathen nations involved in superstition formed such absurd ideas of a future state as led to self-murder, as well as to other acts injurious to individuals and communities. They imagined that all who died required many necessaries in the other world, for their comfort and accommodation. In consequence of this opinion when a prince or chief died, his wives, favourites, domestics, horses, hounds, &c. were slain to administer to his pleasures or to attend him in the next world. All living things which he was supposed to stand in need of were put to death, and their bloody carcasses interred together for his service. Both ancient and modern nations entertained this opinion. The widows of the ancient Indians voluntarily burned themselves to accompany their deceased husbands, and frequently contended for that

It discourages self-murder.

(x) Cod: Theod. lib. x, tit. 27, p. 188, vol. iii. and iv. Edit. Gothof:

(y) Lindenbrog: Lex Visigoth, lib. 6, tit. 3.

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honour; nor is the abominable custom abolished to this day in the empire of Indostan. The druids maintained that they who killed themselves to accompany their friends to another world, shall live with them there: and the same sentiments prevailed among the northern nations. Hence that contempt of life, and the multitude of suicides in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and other heathen kingdoms. The Gospel, by subverting gentilism, tended to abolish suicide which was the fruit of it; nor can it be denied but religious suicide would have lasted as long as the superstition which produced it. The Scripture doctrine of futurity, when duly inculcated, must have removed all those erroneous and mischievous opinions; by declaring that in the next world they *neither marry nor are given in marriage*; and that its pleasures are *such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive (z)*. However, suicide among the heathens arose from other causes besides superstition; namely, from the dogmas of some philosophers who esteemed the horrid deed as noble and magnanimous. Seneca and Plutarch commend Cato Uticensis for committing it; and Seneca (*a*), Pliny the elder (*b*) and Quintilian (*c*) point out various means of executing it. The epicure, whose sole object was pleasure, who denied a providence and who had

(z) See Moore on Suicide, part iv. chap. i. Cæsar de Bello Gall. vi. 15. Bartholinus de Causis contemptæ mortis apud Danos. Keyßer's Antiq. Sept. page 127, Edit. Hanov. Val. Max. ii, 6.

(a) De vita beata, cap. xix. De ira, iii. 15.

(b) ii: 63.

(c) Lib. vi. in Proemio.

no hopes nor fears about futurity, might commit suicide with consistency, when life became irksome; nor would the pride of the stoic allow him to submit to tyranny, to disgrace or to sufferings of any kind. A strong sense of the Gospel motives would support the considerate Christian under every evil that could befall him. If his sufferings are in consequence of his virtues, he bears them patiently from a certainty of a reward; if they are the effects of his vices, he receives them with humility as chastisements of his offences: and if they arise from the faults of others, he considers them as trials of his patience and forgiveness. The Heathen, on the contrary, who wanted such motives, was frequently tempted to put himself to death: and was infinitely more excusable than the modern suicide. The former was sometimes influenced by some principle of honour or patriotism; the latter generally by pride or disappointment, by weakness of mind, by extravagance or penury. The one acted conformably to his religious or philosophical dogmas; while no man educated in a Christian country can commit this crime without knowing he is quitting the post assigned by his Maker, and clearly violating a divine command. The crime of the Heathen having been agreeable to his erroneous principle, we must entertain some pity and even respect for him; while the Christian becomes despicable, by perpetrating the horrid act contrary to his religion and to the laws of his country.

The Heathens, imagining that departed souls are pleased with the effusion of blood, sacri-

It checked  
cruel  
sports.

at the funeral piles or at the practice gave  
 of the deceased: which cruel, namely, the  
 another equally (d). The Romans, as if  
 of gladiators (e). The Romans, as if  
 of human sacrifices at funerals, train-  
 ed up persons to engage in voluntary com-  
 bat, and to fight until they killed each other  
 at the tombs of the deceased. These com-  
 bats were at first confined to the funerals of  
 grandees; but soon became common at the  
 obsequies of private persons, who frequently  
 bequeathed a certain sum for a show of gla-  
 diators (f). The first show of that kind, ex-  
 hibited in Rome by the Bruti on the death  
 of their father, consisted only of three cou-  
 ple (f); but the number was afterwards  
 considerably encreased. Julius Cæsar (g)  
 presented 320 pair of gladiators; the wor-  
 thy Titus furnished a show of them; and  
 Trajan exhibited ten thousand of them for  
 the entertainment of the people (h). Lipfi-  
 us (k) observes that no wars ever made such  
 havock as those games of pleasure, which  
 sometimes deprived Europe of twenty thou-  
 sand lives in one month. By these enter-  
 tainments the principal magistrates of Rome,  
 and afterwards the emperors entertained the  
 citizens and rendered themselves popular.  
 The gladiators were generally slaves or pur-  
 chased captives, whom the *lanistæ* or fencing-  
 masters instructed in the use of arms and  
 hired out for the public shows. Every pair

(d) Lips. Saturn. i, 7.

(e) Ib. cap. 2.

(f) Val. Max. ii, 14.

(g) Plut.

(h) Dion Cassius, lib. lxxvi. lxxviii.

(i) Saturn. i, 12

of combatants was matched and pitted against each other by their master, who obliged each of them to swear not to yield; and who spared neither menaces nor blows to stir up the faint-hearted. Sometimes a gladiator, exhausted with fatigue and loss of blood, held up his finger; to shew he had recourse to the mercy of the spectators: If he shewed a contempt of life, he was generally saved; but the people often cried out *recipe ferrum*; stab him, stab him. As soon as his death was announced, the conqueror dragged the body to a place called Spoliarium, stripped it of its clothes and arms, and inhumanly dispatched him, if he had any life remaining (*l*). The passion for these bloody shows ran so high that senators and knights turned gladiators; and even women engaged in them, in the reigns of Nero and Domitian (*m*). Tertullian (*n*), Cyprian (*o*), Lactantius (*p*) and other christian writers reprobated this cruel practice; the first christian emperor and his son forbade them (*q*): but still they were tolerated, to gratify the people who were extravagantly fond of that inhuman diversion. The worthy Telemachus, an anchoret, travelled from the East to Rome to abolish that amusement; but the people were so enraged at the attempt, that they stoned him to death. The emperor Honorius, provoked at this barbarous act, absolutely forbade them; but they were not entirely abolished 'till the reign of Justin, in the year 520 of the

393.

- (*l*) Ancient Univ. Hist. book iii, chap. 8, p. 804, folio.  
 (*m*) Juven. Sat. vi, 254. (*n*) De Spectaculis.  
 (*o*) Epist. ad Donatum. (*p*) vi, 10.  
 (*q*) Cod. Theod. lib. xv, tit. 12, p. 395, Edit. Gothof.

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Christian era (*r*). While barbarous nations were enamoured of valour and devoted to arms, they courted danger even in pastime and sported with blood. They had military shows and military exercises, called jousts and tournaments; in which they displayed with the sword or lance many specimens of strength, agility or courage. Those feats of personal valour were exhibited on the birth of a prince, on the marriage of a royal pair, on the accession of a new monarch, or for the entertainment of the ladies. The joust was generally a combat between two; whereas in the tournament several were engaged, and without any hatred between the parties. Both these amusements prevailed in the middle ages, until they were condemned by princes who dreaded the martial spirit which subsisted among their subjects, and by the clergy as contrary to the spirit of the Christian religion. The council of Rheims excluded from christian burial persons concerned in tournaments (*s*); and so did the Lateran (*t*) council. We prohibit, said the latter council, those detestable feats in which men engage to shew their strength and rashness; which often end in death and to the injury of the soul. A writer of the 13th century (*w*) reprobates this amusement, and dooms to hell all who engaged in them unless they repent. Some bishops of the 13th century condemned jousts; and different popes forbade them, on account of the mutilation of limbs and the murders they occasioned (*x*).

(*r*) Baron. Annal. vol. viii, page 72. Cassiod. x, 2.

(*s*) Martene, vol. vii, p. 76; Edit. Paris, 1733.

(*t*) Canon 30 Gul. Newbrig. vol. i, p. 259.

(*w*) Cæsarius, lib. xii, cap. 16. Marsh's Library.

(*x*) See Du Cange Jousts, Tournamenta, Hastiludium.

There were few customs of the ancients more absurd than that of single combat, for the decision of doubtful or disputed points. In Gaul, on the death of a chief druid, the next in dignity among the other druids generally succeeded to that high office; but where there were several candidates of equal dignity, the point was determined by the sword (*a*). Frotho, who reigned in Denmark about the time of Christ's birth, required his subjects to terminate disputes in this way; thinking this a more noble method than mere verbal disputation (*b*). The Umbrici, Celtæ and some Gothic nations, decided controversies and even law-suits by the sword; and the conqueror was supposed to have the justest cause. The Franks, Germans, Lombards, Normans, Saxons, Danes, Bavarians and other ancient nations employed single combat to prove their innocence, and to determine the justice or injustice of their cause; and imagined that God would interpose miraculously to decide who was innocent or guilty, just or unjust. The Gothic and Lombard kings, finding their subjects more disposed to war than to political improvement, appointed judges to regulate trials by combat; and the Saxons, Normans and other nations followed their example. The judges thus appointed fixed the time, place, arms &c. of the combatants, and sent a crier to cite them to appear; but did not suffer them to fight where the matter could be decided by witnesses or otherwise. This was called judicial combat, and allowed to be legal; whereas combats were considered as un-

CHAP. III.  
Christianity and its teachers discouraged duels.

(*a*) Cæsar de Belle Gall. lib. vi. chap. 12.

(*b*) Sax. Gram. lib. v.



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lawful where a judge did not preside. In some places duels were employed in deciding matters of property; and the parties used to invoke God to grant victory to him who had right on his side. According to a law (c) of the Burgundians, if a man swore that his neighbour owed him a debt, and the neighbour denied it, the parties were allowed to decide the controversy in a duel; and this law was soon adopted by the Franks and other nations. Where men were charged with crimes, they fought to exculpate themselves; and the event was supposed to determine their innocence or guilt. Among the Angli and Werini, if a man was accused of burning an house; it was expected that he and eleven other persons should swear to his innocence, or determine the affair in battle; and the laws of other nations contained similar regulations. Near the end of the 7th century, Gundeberga the queen of the Lombards, in proof of her chastity, appointed a champion to fight for her (d); early in the 9th, Charles the uncle of the emperor Lotharius, to try his wife's fidelity, appointed one combatant to fight for her and another for himself; and the emperor Orto the Great submitted a dispute between an uncle and a nephew to the issue of a duel (e). They who desire to know more of duels, judicial combats and the causes in which they were employed, may consult the authors last referred to. In the mean time I proceed to shew that Christianity tended to abolish this usage, and that the clergy exerted themselves

640.

(c) Tit. xlv, Lindenbrog.

(d) Paulus Diaconus de Gestis Longobard: lib. iv, cap. 49.

(e) Du Cange, Spelman and Lindenbrog's Glossaries, vix Puellum, monomachia, Campio, pugna.

with

with zeal in discouraging it. Single combat was founded on an opinion that God always decides in favour of truth, justice and innocence: this opinion is overturned by Christianity which represents God's favourites as frequently reviled and chastised in this world, as a preparative for the next. The clergy zealously opposed judicial combats, and had influence to get them abolished in most parts of Christendom. When Suon Otto, king of Denmark, embraced the Gospel he prohibited them; Harold, the successor of Sueno Estricius, was prompted by the Gospel to forbid them in Denmark, Sweden and Norway (f); and Waldemar, a king of Denmark, prohibited them on a religious principle (g). Agobard a pious bishop wrote against them with severity (b); and two councils held in France anathematized those who engaged in them (i). In short judicial combats were discouraged and abrogated in almost all Christian kingdoms; but private duels still continued, notwithstanding the efforts of the clergy to curb or prevent them. War and single combat having been the ruling passions of those days, whatever opposed them was treated with indignation or contempt; nor was it possible to put an entire stop to the ferocity of men who were but almost Christians, and whose language while they were Heathens was, *we submit not our competitions to men, and even among the Gods we appeal only to Mars* (k). However in process of time, laws were frequently made against all manner of duelling; but these laws

981;

1163

840.

1034.

(f) Du Cange, *ferrum candens*, Saxo, lib. x, & Ericus Up-  
salensis, lib. i.

(g) Resenii *Jus Antiquum Danicum*, p. 642, 643.

(b) Lindenbrog *Gloss. vox duellum*.

(i) Baron: vol. xi, p. 113 and sequ.

(k) See Moore on Duels, p. 322, Vol. ii.

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were often violated, and the violation of them connived at, in spite of the clergy who wished to restrain them. The council of Trent (1) strictly prohibited duels, as unbecoming Christians; declared it a detestable custom, suggested by the devil for the destruction of both soul and body; excommunicated not only those who fought, but their associates, advisers and even the spectators of the battle; pronounced their goods confiscated, denied them christian burial as self-murderers; and declared those princes who connived at or permitted duels deprived of all temporal dominion in the places where they were fought. In other places the clergy wrote and preached against duels; and their exhortations would have been more effectual, had they not been counteracted by the example of persons in authority, the chief of which were Francis the first, and Henry the fourth of France; the former of which challenged Charles the fifth, and the latter was known to have been partial to single combat, though in some cases he affected to discourage it. It is to be feared that at present religion has little effect in restraining a practice which is considered as absolutely necessary in preserving men from insult. But that it is not necessary for that purpose appears from hence: that females, clergymen and the society called Quakers, are no more insulted than the most desperate and successful duelist,

Its teachers checked war among fellow subjects.

Christianity and its teachers reconciled differences and checked the violence of war among different tribes or families. The Gospel pronounced peace-makers happy; and is so

(1) *Sess. xxv. cap. 19.*

clear

on the point, that no man can think him-  
a good Christian who obstinately rejects  
verture for reconciliation. *Blessed are the*  
*makers*, says the Evangelist; and many  
ed to the blessing, by interposing to re-  
le differences and to promote peace and  
ard. Where kings disagreed or their sub-  
were turbulent, the former were recon-  
and the latter restored to obedience by  
fluence of churchmen, who often inter-  
to remove dissension among kings, re-  
n among their subjects, and to restore  
to kingdoms. The clergy seldom failed  
e their endeavours to reconcile parties  
were at variance with each other: the  
instances of their interposition are to be  
with in history. In Constantinople, in  
reign of Justinian, there was a melancholy  
ance of their efforts for peace; during a  
lent battle between some Barbarians and  
e inhabitants of that city. To stop the bat-  
e, several ecclesiastics rushed in among the  
combatants, with their bibles, crucifixes and  
prayers; but they interposed in vain: for the  
Barbarians despised their bibles and prayers,  
killed the clergy and spoiled or burned every  
thing in the city (*m*). To check the martial  
spirit which prevailed in the middle ages, the  
clergy interposed their own authority and that  
of religion; Councils prohibited hostilities on  
pain of excommunication, and warriors were  
required to sheath their swords in compliance  
with the Gospel. The threats and exhorta-  
tions of these men had some influence in re-  
straining private wars; and suspended hostili-  
ties on certain days and seasons appointed by

527;

(*m*) Zonare Annal. xiv, 6,

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the church for solemn acts of devotion. In the middle ages the clergy introduced what they called *Treuga Dei*, or the Truce of God; which checked the fierceness of war, and forbade men to injure their neighbour in his person or fortune on certain seasons and days of the year. These truces were proclaimed by the clergy in England, France, Spain and other nations. The council of Eanham (n), held in the reign of Ethelred, enjoined a cessation of strife and discord from the first day of Advent to the eighth of Epiphany, from Septuagesima Sunday to the fifteenth day after Easter, and on certain fast days. Two councils which were held in France for appeasing sedition thundered out anathemas against the violators of peace. One of these prohibited offering violence to men's persons and properties; and poured out maledictions against those who acted contrary to peace and justice. The threats of those councils had such an effect in some places, that the people lifted up their hands unto God and cried aloud, peace! peace! peace! In other places the bishops and presbyters, holding burning candles in their hands, prayed that as these candles were extinguished, so the joy of such as refused to obey the bishops relative to peace should be extinguished before the angels. Having uttered these words, they flung down the candles on the ground and extinguished them: which awful ceremony struck such terror into the congregation, that they cried out, thus may God extinguish the joy of those who refuse peace and justice! In France the Truce of God prohibited the people to take any thing

1010.

1034.

1041.

(n) Wilkins's *Leges Anglofax*; p. 120.

from any man violently, or to attempt revenge on an enemy during certain seasons. The following year this truce was proclaimed in England by Edward the Confessor, a religious prince, and afterwards by William the Conqueror, in words to this purpose: "Let the  
 " Truce of God and of the Church prevail  
 " through the kingdom from the first day of  
 " Advent to the eighth after Epiphany, from  
 " Septuagesima to the eighth day after Easter,  
 " from the Ascension to the eighth day after  
 " Pentecost, on every Sunday, on the eves of  
 " all the Apostles and Saints whose feasts are  
 " announced in churches, and on the feast of  
 " the particular saint of each place;" which statute of Edward and William was afterwards confirmed in the council of Lillebonne. Henry bishop of Liege prevailed on the barons, dukes, &c. to forbid men to carry arms, to burn houses or to commit slaughter in his diocese from the first day of Advent to the feast of Epiphany, from Septuagesima to the eighth day after Pentecost, through all the festivals celebrated by the Church, and for two days before and two days after the beginning and ending of the great festivals. These regulations were adopted in different dioceses, and confirmed by Pope Urban II. in the council of Clermont. This council prohibited men to assault, wound, kill, rob, plunder or any way molest on the above times women, monks, ecclesiastics, foreigners, merchants, servants, ploughmen, oxen, plough-horses, &c. In the kingdom of Arragon all Christians were required to refrain from hostilities on the eves and festivals of the Virgin, of the Apostles, of St. Michael, St. Martin, &c. from the first day of Advent to the eighth of Epiphany, and  
 on

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III,

1042.

1066.

1080.

1071.

1095.

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1103.

on other solemn feasts; nor did the bishops suffer the contending parties to prepare for war fifteen days before the truces were prescribed. The archbishop of Auch proclaimed peace and the Truce of God in his province; and a similar proclamation was issued out by other bishops and princes in their respective dioceses and districts on certain times, of which we have given specimens in the preceding parts of this section. The Heathen sages made no such exertions against violence and cruelty! The exertions of the clergy had the desired effect in many instances; tho' they were frequently defeated during rude ages by men violently attached to bloodshed and war. The suspension of hostilities even for certain seasons, by giving time for reflection, for the subsiding of anger and the reconciling of parties, must have considerably abated the violence of war. They who desire further information on this point, may consult Du Cange (c) and the many writers quoted by this excellent author. How shamefully unfair or prejudiced was Mr. Hume, in suppressing the numerous efforts of the bishops for peace, but dwelling with pleasure on the few instances in which they engaged in war? Some bishops who held certain ecclesiastical possessions subject, like those of the barons, to military service, were required to supply their quota to their kings when called upon for that purpose. This writer must have known that the bishops who had no temporalities did not send troops, that some prelates who had temporal possessions resigned them rather than

(c) *Treuga Dei; Confratritæ Dei, Agnus Dei*—Original Work and Supplement of Du Cange, in ten volumes.

comply with the conditions, and that some sent their quota and staid at home; while a few were prompted by mistaken zeal to head their troops and engage in battle (p). But surely the bishops of those days are no more chargeable with a love of war, than the present clergy with being duellists, because a few of them fight duels regardless of decency and the becoming sanctity of their office. Several of the ancient bishops having exerted themselves in reconciling differences; we cannot suppose the inferior clergy neglected this duty: Where they were unable to settle differences among the common people, they regulated the length of the sticks they fought with, and required that they should not be sharp, nor knotty nor crooked (q). Nor do the present clergy neglect to interpose their authority in preventing quarrels among their neighbours and parishioners. The late worthy bishop Woodward, when dean of Clogher, frequently prevented bloodshed in that town; by rushing in among the combatants, and exerting that influence which is inseparable from piety and virtue: nor is it an uncommon practice with the Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland to interfere to prevent quarrels when they have an opportunity of doing so.

Christianity and its teachers restrained the violence of war not only among different families or tribes in the same nation, but between different kingdoms. The Heathens were engaged in almost incessant wars; and their battles were more furious than in Christian na-

It checked the violence of war among nations.

(p) Du Cange—*Hostis & Exercitus Episcoporum.*

(q) Vide Du Cange, Lindenbrog and Spelman's *Glossaries*,



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tions. The temple of Janus in Rome, which was open in time of war and shut during a peace, was shut but thrice in 726 years, and for the first 496 years of that time the Romans enjoyed but forty-three years of tranquillity; whereas in Italy from the year 476 of the christian era to 840 the intervals of peace amounted to 258 years. If we compare the battles which preceded the first Christian emperor with those which were fought from his time to the invention of gunpowder, we shall find the carnage in the former was much greater than in the latter. In the social war three hundred thousand were slain in one year; one hundred thousand in two years in Sylla's war with Marius; and a greater number in the wars of Pompey and Cæsar of Brutus and Cassius. The emperor Claudius slew at one time three hundred and twenty thousand Germans; and M. Antoninus killed a greater number of these and of other nations. In a battle fought at Cremona between Otho and Vitellius for the imperial Scepter, forty thousand were slain on both sides; fifty thousand in an engagement between the generals of Vitellius and Vespasian, and fifty thousand more in a battle fought in Rome. The twentieth part of this mischief was not done in Christian nations for 800 years after Constantine; though the empire had been invaded by the Goths, Vandals and other Barbarians who were as fierce as any people of antiquity. We admit that Christian states warred against each other with violence and acrimony; but maintain that the ancient wars were more bloody than those of Christendom. It appears from the calculations

lations of a learned writer (*p*) that modern warriors were less cruel to the vanquished than Pagan heroes unsoftened by the Gospel; the spirit of which has corrected the fierceness of war and checked the rage of this barbarous practice. Nor shall we be surprized that it operated in this way, if we consider that the clergy employed the evangelical precepts of charity and peace, together with their influence on princes in restraining the violence of war in numerous instances of which the following are perhaps the most remarkable. The first Christian emperor restrained the fierceness of his soldiers; by rewarding him who saved the life of an enemy made captive in war. "Constantine," says Eusebius (*q*), "commanded his soldiers, after they had obtained a victory, to shew mercy to their captives; and to induce them to humanity and to buy out their cruelty, allowed them a certain petty ransom for preserving their prisoners. This expedient the emperors invented to allure men to mercy; so that many of the Barbarians were dismissed in safety the emperor paying a ransom for their lives." The most learned historian can not find a parallel to this humane act of the first Christian prince in the annals of the most illustrious of the Heathen warriors! In the 6th century Gregory the great laboured to negotiate a peace between the emperor Maurice and the Lombards who were committing hostilities in different parts of Italy; and was successful in his negotiation (*r*). During a violent war between Egfred king of

(*p*) Bozius de signis Ecclesiæ, vol. ii. p. 354. 358. 368. 369. 370. 474. 667, &c.

(*q*) De Constantino, lib. ii. cap. 13.

(*r*) Greg: Turon: x. i. & Bed: ii. 1.

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the Angles and Edrelred king of the Mercians; Theore a pious bishop interposed to reconcile them and prevailed so far by his exhortations that a lasting peace was concluded between them<sup>(s)</sup>. We are furnished with other instances of the peacemaking dispositions of the clergy of those days. During a war between the Franks and Lombards, pope Stephen 3d affectionately entreated Pepin to stop the effusion of human blood; and his exhortations produced a peace and leagues of amity. In the following century also the bishops were zealous in restraining war among princes and states. Pope Nicholas exhorted Charles and Lewis kings of the Franks to preserve the peace which they made with each other. "Spare the sword," says the bishop, "dread the effusion of human blood, restrain your anger, lull strife and banish hatred from your hearts. Let each of you be content with his lot, enjoy in peace his own inheritance not disturbing nor invading the rights of others. Guard against vainglory, superciliousness or the ambition of usurping other peoples rights; and let justice, charity, harmony and peace reign among you. Whoever acts otherwise acts not agreeably to our heavenly father<sup>(u)</sup>." This was an excellent lecture, and having no doubt been delivered with true Christian piety tended to operate powerfully on the conduct of those princes. Fulco arch-bishop of Rheims reconciled Charles the Simple and Otho; and two bishops prevented an unnatural war which was going to break out between king Otho and

(s) Ford: Hist: Eccl: lib. iv. cap. 21.

(u) Baron: vol ix p. 220.

(u) Id. vol. x. p. 299.

his son Liuthulphus. The father came into the field with an army and his son with another; and the two armies were near each other and ready to engage. To prevent the fight two pious prelates with full confidence in God stepped forward and entered the camps, represented the mischief that must arise from the war, exhorted them to peace and by their affectionate exhortations prevailed on them to drop their resentment and to enter into compacts of peace and amity (*w*). The next signal instance of this kind was when pope John 15th sent a legate to England, to reconcile Ethelred king of the west Saxons and Richard duke of Normandy. This legate succeeded in his embassy; by inspiring each of them with a love and fear of God and of the apostolic see (*x*). Pope Alexander 3d made peace between Lewis of France and Henry of England (*y*); and Innocent 3d dispatched a legate to mediate a peace between king John of England and Philip of France. The latter of these princes having told the legate that it was no part of the duty of a pope to interfere in such matters: the pope with piety and modesty maintained that it was his duty provided he did not interfere with the laws of justice and humanity. The Psalmist, says he, desires us to seek peace and ensue it, that is to seek 'till you find it; and the angels at Christ's birth proclaimed peace on earth, goodwill towards men (*z*). By these and other passages of scripture did the bishop justify his interference; nor was such interference unworthy the preacher of peace: no Heathen philosopher or Pa-

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1161

1203

(*w*) Baron: p. 625. 734.

(*y*) ib. vol. xii. p. 461.

1203. n. 55.

(*x*) ib. p. 850

(*z*) Raynaldi Anhal. A. D.

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gan priest ever interfered in this way! In process of time Christianity so altered the dispositions and habits of its professors that they acted under its influence without their knowledge, and quite differently from their Heathen ancestors. In the year 1783 the British and Irish parliaments unanimously voted thanks to General Elliot; for his distinguished humanity in saving the lives of the officers and soldiers of the enemy at Gibraltar. We admit that individuals among the Greeks and Romans displayed acts of generosity towards enemies; but defy the unbeliever to point out a single act of this kind unanimously approved and recommended by the Roman senate or by any of the Greek states. However chivalry co-operated with religion in restraining the fierceness of warriors in the middle ages; nor were wars waged with so much ferocity when humanity as well as courage became the characteristic of knighthood. The knight of those days studied an elegance of manners and the graces of external behaviour; politeness became a saintly virtue and contributed to check the violence of war during ages of disorder. He exhibited shining examples of humanity and delicacy; and his generosity to the vanquished was a satire on warriors of ancient times. He shewed no indecent joy in his conquests; ascribed his own success not to superior valour but to fortune; and enhanced his greatness by generous sympathy and magnanimous condescension. However, chivalry was a composition of devotion as well as of gallantry and valour. The knight vowed to defend Christianity and to prefer public to private good; he considered himself a saint as well as a hero; and professed to vindicate  
the

the wrongs of the injured and to spill his blood in defence of innocence and virtue. He redressed wrongs, defended virgins, rescued captive princesses, humbled usurpers, guarded a lady's honour against violence and her character against slander; and thought it contrary to the laws of chivalry to neglect the weak or the oppressed, the widow or the orphan. This was the character of the genuine knight; nor can it be doubted but it produced happy effects before it degenerated into Don-quixotism and while it observed the rules of the primitive institution.

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As history records the lives and deaths of princes, their wars and the number of men slain in those wars, the assassinations of kings and the revolutions in governments; we are enabled to form some judgment of the effects of the Gospel in each of these respects. We have proved in the last section that the wars of the Heathens were less interrupted than those of the Christians; it will now appear that there were fewer assassinations of princes and fewer revolutions in Christian than in Heathen states, that Christian princes were less profligate than the Heathen emperors who preceded them, and that the teachers of the Gospel actually checked the vices and the violence of rulers in many instances. The relations of Heathen kings have been more cruel and unjust in their attempts to obtain the scepter than those of Christian princes. A greater number of the kings of the Chaldeans, Persians, Seleucidæ, Parthians, Egyptians and Macedonians were slain by their relations to ascend the throne, than in Spain, Gaul, Britain, Scotland, Germany, Hungary, Poland and

It improved rulers and subjects in virtue and happiness.

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and Denmark which embraced the Gospel. Plutarch (a) mentions a king who boasted he was not afraid of his own son but suffered him to approach him with a spear in his hand. "There was," says he, "but one instance of domestic murder among the descendants of Antigonus, which was that of Philip who killed his own son. But almost all the other families afford numerous examples of the murder of children, mothers and wives: and as to the murder of brothers, it was committed without any scruple; for it was a maxim of government like the first principles of mathematicians, that it was necessary for a king to kill his brother for his own security." The extensive knowledge of Plutarch and his credit as a writer render his testimony decisive in this point. Of near forty Heathen emperors who preceded Constantine, there were but few who were not killed in war or assassinated by their relations (b); whereas of fifty successive kings of France not one was slain either of these ways. About forty Pagan emperors having reigned about 300 years, and the fifty Christian kings of France near 1100; the latter must have been less addicted to war or fewer of them must have been murdered by their relations. There has been a greater number of revolutions in a given time in Heathen governments than in Christian states. The Assyrian, Persian and Macedonian empires lasted but a short time (c); and Heathen emperors of seventeen nations or families reigned in Rome from Nero to Constantine; whereas princes of only three Christian fami-

(a) In Demetrio prope finem.

(b) See Orosius & Jornandes de Regnorum Successione.

(c) Dion: Hist: lib. 1—sub initio.

lies,

lies, and these related to each other governed the empire for 300 years together. In France the family of Clovis reigned 250 years, that of Pepin 243, and that of Hugh Capet 800: and not one of their kings was slain or banished by his relations. The family of Egbert ruled in England 266 years and that of Henry 434; and the descendants of Borivo-ris the first Bohemian prince who embraced Christianity reigned for upwards of 300 years. The family of Geylas reigned in Hungary above 300 years; that of Miceflaus in Poland above 400; that of Eric the first Christian prince of Denmark about 500; and that of Recharedus in Spain 1100 years. Before the reign of Charlemagne, the Germans were dispossessed by strangers above twenty times; whereas since that period which is about 1000 years they have not been conquered by any foreign nation. The republic of Venice lasted near 1300 years, without a civil war or being subjected to a foreign enemy; and in Portugal there was not a rebellion for nearly 500 years in succession: whilst history furnishes no such instances of peace among the ancient Heathens (*d*). We cannot then be surprised that assassins and revolutionists are enemies of an institution which is adverse to both! It is undeniable that wars among nations, the assassinations of princes and revolutions in states arose from violations of the letter or spirit of Christianity; and equally undeniable that Christian princes have been less vicious than the Heathen emperors who preceded them. Of about forty Heathen emperors who preceded Constantine there were

(*d*) These are the calculations of Bozjus de Signis Ecclesiae vol. ii, p. 368 and sequ. 474, 667.



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not eight good men; while the rest committed such acts of cruelty, rapacity, lust, luxury and gluttony as cannot be paralleled in Christendom from the days of Constantine to the present time. Their cruel and impure acts must have infected their subjects; as much as the recital of them would shock the delicacy of Christian readers. Only a few of them were good men (e); and it would be easy to prove that fewer of their Christian successors were remarkably wicked and dissolute. Vespasian, Titus, Nerva, Trajan, the two Antonines and perhaps one or two more possessed some excellent qualities; but the best of them publicly committed acts which the most abandoned nominal Christian would be ashamed to avow. Antoninus Pius got a decree of the senate for erecting a temple to Faustina an unchaste woman: which instance of respect from so good a prince must have afforded no small encouragement to the matrons of Rome to follow her example. The piety and virtues of many ancient bishops gained them considerable authority which they often employed in restraining the vices and the violence of kings. Before the establishment of Christianity they possessed no influence with princes; but, after it was established, employed it in reproving wicked kings in imitation of Nathan and other prophets or from an abhorrence of acts contrary to the Gospel. For several centuries they seldom connived at the vices of princes or passed them over without reproof. In the end of the 4th century Ambrose bishop of Milan reproved the emperor Theodosius; for

\*(e) Tacit: Sueton: Dion Cassius, *Meursius de Luxu Romanorum*.

cruelty to the people of Thessalonica who killed several of the imperial officers and soldiers in that city. Theodosius threatened to punish them with rigour, but was prevailed on by Ambrose and other bishops to pardon them. However his courtiers having urged the necessity of rigorously punishing them; the emperor was prevailed on to give up the inhabitants of Thessalonica into the hands of the army. The people were assembled in the forum when they were surrounded by soldiers who fell on them indiscriminately, and massacred 7000 without distinction of age or sex; that many innocent persons were involved in the massacre. Ambrose having heard of it Milan wrote to the emperor, represented the enormity of the crime and exhorted him to efface his sin by repentance and good works. The emperor on reading the letter felt some remorse and soon after an hearty sorrow for having consented to the massacre. Thinking himself obliged to express his repentance publicly; he hastened to Milan and repaired to the cathedral to hear prayers and take of the sacrament. The bishop having been informed that he was coming went out of church, met him at the door, represented the shocking circumstances of the massacre and his rashness in thinking to enter the Lord's table while his hands were stained with innocent blood. Theodosius heard those reproaches with modesty and acknowledged his guilt; and said he had hopes of God's pardon on the example of king David who had been pardoned though guilty of adultery and murder. The bishop replied, as you have sinned against God imitate his clemency. Theodosius submitted without a reply,

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reply, led a private and penitential life for eight months without entering a church, declared he felt no comfort while he was excluded from it, and expressed his readiness to perform such penances as his crime deserved. Having done penance according to the bishop's injunction he was admitted into the church, where he stripped off his royal ornaments and prostrate on the ground implored the divine mercy in the words of David, *my soul hath cleaved to the earth, give me life according to thy word.* His sorrow shewed itself in so moving and edifying a manner that the whole congregation prayed and wept with him (1): which spectacle must have had a good effect on many and given them an abhorrence of the crime for which he was doing penance. This instance of firmness in the bishop and of sorrow in the king tended to restrain other kings from acts of cruelty; and indeed it is undeniable, that in after ages there was seldom a cruel Theodosius but there was found a pious Ambrose to rebuke him for it. For several centuries the church might boast of men who could not be influenced by promises or threats to desert their duty. Chrysostom who was arch-bishop of Constantinople in the end of the 4th century was remarkable for piety and zeal, and directed both to the benefit of the poor and to the advancement of virtue. On his first interview with the emperor Arcadius and the empress Exdoxia, he discoursed on repentance and the necessity of reforming the abuses which prevailed at their court, and declared that neither

(1) Ambrosii Oratio de obitu Theodosii, Theodoret, lib: v, cap: 17—Rufin: ii, 18.

fear nor pretended respect should shut his mouth when it was his duty to speak (m). CHAP.  
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We cannot tell the particular effect of this discourse, but judge that so much zeal in so good a man must have had some influence on the emperor and empress who no doubt would have expressed their displeasure at his discourse had they been uninfluenced by it. In succeeding ages several bishops boldly reprimanded the misconduct of princes and refused to bear the weight of their sins. In a council of Paris held in the 6th century, Gregory of Tours exhorted his brother bishops to suggest to kings such counsel as favoured of episcopal sanctity. "Be attentive," saith he, "O ye priests of God, and especially you who are favourites of the king: give him holy counsel lest he should incur the divine anger and lose his kingdom, glory &c. Be not silent but speak up, lay before him his transgressions, lest some evil happen to him and ye should be guilty of his sins." King Chilperic having heard of this exhortation was angry and threatened the bishop; but the bishop disregarded his threats, and refused to take any food 'till he swore to observe the laws of the realm and the rules of the church. The king having pressed him to eat, the prelate observed that to bishops the sweetest delicacy was to fulfil the divine will: which instance of piety and firmness so affected the king that he took the oath (n). In other nations the bishops were equally pious and careful in restraining the vices of kings. Hincmar bishop of Rheims insisted on the obser-

877.

(m) Palladius, Socrat. Sozom. Theodoret.

(n) Thomass: vol. ii, p. 753.

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vance of the canons against Lewis the 3d, who intended to violate them, told the king that what he wished to do would be ruinous to him, and declared that he would not in his old age deviate from what he was tenacious of for 36 years. Did I, said he, consent to violate both divine and human laws, I should destroy myself and not serve you: the death which you threaten me with is rather to be wished for and no more to be dreaded than rushing out of a falling prison (o). Fulco the successor of Hincmar admonished the empress Rechildis to amend her life and to lay aside anger, strife, murder, luxury, oppression of the poor &c.; exhorted her to love God and her neighbour, to live piously, justly and soberly for the sake of her soul, having always before her eyes the day of her death and resurrection (p). Gregory 7th. exhorted the kings of the Danes, Swedes, Norwegians and Visigoths to piety and charity, reminded them of the shortness and vanity of worldly greatness and directed their attention to celestial happiness (q). Surely such exhortations tended to reform men who had no power on earth to restrain or control them! Sueno king of Denmark having put to death certain persons whom he suspected to be his enemies near the beginning of the 11th century; Roskildus a Danish bishop excluded him from the church and made him do penance (r); and thereby discouraged similar offences in that kingdom. The kings of Sweden were obliged to swear to love God and the Church, not

(o) Thomass: vol. ii, p. 756.

(p) Baron: vol. x, p. 515.

(q) Joh: Magnus, lib. i. de vitis Pontificum, p. 24.

(r) Thomass: vol. ii, p. 762.

to injure any man in his person or property, to preserve truth and justice and to suppress falsehood, injustice and perversions of the law (s). In every nation where the clergy had influence, the oaths administered at the coronation of kings were excellent and tended to render princes pious and good men. The forms also at their coronation were evidently suggested by Christianity and its teachers, and had an evident tendency to render them just and merciful. One of those forms was as follows: The arch-bishop put a staff into his hand and said unto him, take this staff as the emblem of thy sacred government; that you may strengthen the weak, confirm the tottering, correct the wicked and direct the good in the way of salvation. Another form is this; take the scepter as the rule of divine equity which governs the good and punishes the bad: in this learn to love justice and to hate iniquity (t). These forms are excellent lessons to a prince and far superior to any thing suggested by the philosophers or lawgivers among the Heathens! A little work of cardinal Bellarmin (u) points out the duty of a Christian prince towards his wife, children, ministers, deputies, officers, domestics &c. &c. so forcibly on Christian principles that it must have improved those princes who read it in religion and virtue. Surely the enemy of the Gospel when acquainted with its tendency and effects must be ashamed of his attacks on so excellent an institution.

(s) Loccenii Leges, tit. i, cap. 4.

(t) Du Cange Baculus regius.

(u) De officio principis Christiani:

## CHAP. III.

It re-  
strain'd the  
violence of  
princes.

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Pious and good divines restrained the violence of some princes who were determined on doing mischief in several instances of which the following are perhaps the most remarkable. The first instance was at Antioch where the inhabitants raised a sedition against the emperor Theodosius, broke the statues of himself, of his two sons and of his deceased wife and committed other outrages in that city. The emperor enraged at their conduct at first intended to demolish the city; but afterwards resolved to deprive it of the privilege of being the metropolis of the East and to punish severely the authors and promoters of the sedition. For this latter purpose he dispatched two officers whose arrival at Antioch diffused an universal terror and drove several of the citizens to mountains and desarts: while some were imprisoned until the emperor should send further orders. Flavian bishop of Antioch left the city in the beginning of those troubles and set out for Constantinople to the emperor; to prevent if possible the calamities with which a multitude was threatened. In his absence some Anchorets revered for their sanctity came forth from their retreats near Antioch; to soften the hearts of the two officers who were punishing the citizens. One of the Anchorets, named Macedonius (*w*) addressed the officers with such freedom and piety in a shabby coat as excited their surprize, respect and attention. "The emperor," saith he, "however distinguished by his imperial dignity is still a man and ought to consider his nature as well as his rank: he rules men of the same nature with himself and images of

(*w*) Theodoret: Hist: v. 19.

“the Supreme Being: let him not provoke  
“the almighty by destroying those images of  
“the divine nature for an affront offered to  
“the inanimate images of his body. Other  
“statues may be erected in the room of those  
“that have been demolished; but notwith-  
“standing, his boasted power your emperor is  
“unable to make any reparation for a single  
“life which he has once taken away.” The  
officers heard these words of the Anchorite  
with veneration, transmitted them to the em-  
peror and agreed to suspend the punishment  
of the criminals ’till they heard his further  
pleasure. Nor was Flavian idle in another  
quarter. On his arrival in Constantinople he  
went to the palace, and coming into the em-  
perors presence stood still at a distance and let  
his tears tell his business. In this posture of  
respect and sorrow he remained for some time  
and seemed to bear the weight of the public  
guilt. The emperor most sensibly affected  
by those marks of grief and confusion soften-  
ed his fury into a mild expostulation, repeated  
the many favours which Antioch received  
from him, asked, is this a suitable return for  
my goodness? how have I deserved this treat-  
ment from them? and even if I gave them  
reason to complain of me why must the dead  
and innocent be insulted? have I not on all  
occasions shewn a particular regard for An-  
tioch and preferred it to all the cities in my  
dominions even to that in which I was born?  
The bishop, knowing the justice of those re-  
proaches, did not attempt to justify the citi-  
zens, but repeated his sighs and tears and  
made an affecting speech which is preserved en-  
tire in one of the homilies of Chrysostom (\*).

(\*) Homil. iii. ad populum Antiochenum.



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He owns that the most rigorous punishment would be too mild for them; but observes that conquering his resentment and passing an act of oblivion would be the brightest ornament of the imperial crown. It is true, says the bishop, your statues have been shamefully abused and demolished; but you may erect more valuable ones in the hearts of your subjects by this generous action. He reminded the emperor of a noble saying of his when he had lately given an act of grace thro' the whole empire; namely that he *wished he could as easily raise the dead as save the criminals which he delivered*. Flavian taking advantage of this declaration of the emperor told him, it was now in his power to execute this princely wish, and pressed him to this act of clemency in order to do honour to the Christian religion. The Jews and Pagans, says he, who have their eyes fixt on your imperial majesty at this critical juncture will be edified by your generosity if you incline to mercy; will praise and worship that God who can raise men above the feelings of nature, and embrace that Gospel which teaches such sublime morality. He then gives a melancholy description of the miseries of the people of Antioch, tells what they suffered from their just apprehensions, what danger they had been exposed to by flying and how desolate that city was already. He exhorted him to compassion from motives of humanity and religion, and concludes with expressing his resolution of never seeing Antioch unless he could carry home the welcome news of a pardon. The emperor was so strongly affected by the prelate that he could scarcely refrain from tears, and in a few words declared, that he forgave his rebellious

lions subjects at Antioch. On Flavian's return to this city all sorrow was banished, and the happiness of that day acknowledged by several marks of universal joy. But the bishop's humility was equal to his piety and tenderness; for when he was asked how he dissuaded the emperor from punishing them he would not assume any credit to himself, but ascribed the change in Theodosius to God only (*y*). About the middle of the 5th century, Attila king of the Huns commonly called the scourge of God laid Italy waste, demolished several cities and flushed with success resolved to march to Rome. The news of his design soon reached that city and filled all the inhabitants with terror and confusion: and the emperor Valentinian not having been in a condition to meet him was advised to quit Italy. However before every thing was given up as lost, it was resolved to try a proposal for peace and to employ Leo the archbishop of Rome to divert Attila from his design; tho' it seemed an hopeless project to think of softening a barbarian grown insolent by his successes, or of prevailing on him to drop his design of making himself master of the empire whose capitol was near him. However Leo, animated with piety and concern for his country, accepted of the commission accompanied by two of the nobles. Placing his confidence in God who rules the heart he passed the Po and found Attila with his numerous army encamped near Mantua. The bishop opened his commission, and pressed his business with such pious zeal and masterly eloquence that he softened the heart of

(*y*) Vide Baron: Annal: A. D. 398.

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the barbarian, prevailed on him to agree to a peace, to draw off his troops and to give the Romans no further molestation. The archbishop on his return to Rome was received with joy by a people saved from destruction which seemed inevitable; but instead of receiving any compliment for himself he directed all their gratitude to God by ordering a public thanksgiving for their deliverance. This bishop also restrained the violence of Genseric king of the Vandals who invaded Italy, and was entering Rome with an intention of burning the city and putting its inhabitants to the sword. I shall produce but another instance of the same kind which happened in the 6th century. When Totilas king of the Ostrogoths took Rome, bishop Pelagius (a), feeling for the citizens who had been almost starved during the siege and likely to be destroyed by victorious troops, came to the king dressed in his pontificals, with the Gospel in his hands. Totilas seeing him asked, what is the matter Pelagius? do you come to me as a suppliant? I come in that character, saith the bishop: since God has made you my lord and master I pray you pity thy servants, have compassion on the distressed citizens. The king soothed by his venerable aspect, by the appearance of the Gospel and by his pious expressions pardoned the citizens, forbade the further use of the sword or the violation of female chastity, exhorted his exulting troops to restrain their ferocity and reminded them of the uncertainty of human affairs, of which the situation of the Romans at that very moment furnished an edifying instance. Surely

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all the philosophers of antiquity have not prevented so much mischief by their sophistry and babble as Flavian, Leo and Pelagius did by their pious exertions. It will appear in the sequel that the clergy restrained the oppressions and exactions of kings in numerous instances.

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It appears from a passage of Pliny's (a) letter to the emperor Trajan that the Christians bound themselves by an oath not to steal, rob, break faith or commit adultery; nor can there be a doubt but sincere Christians abstained from these crimes in millions of instances not one of which is recorded in history. All true converts no doubt observed the Christian rule of doing unto others whatsoever they would men should do unto them: a rule so excellent that Alexander Severus (b) a Pagan emperor ordered it to be proclaimed by a crier, and written on the walls of his palace and of all public buildings in Rome. No act of dishonesty was allowed by the first profelytes to the Gospel; and if any of them was convicted of it the whole society protested against him. The narrow limits of this work render it necessary to exhibit only a few instances of the effects of Christianity on each topic. The reformation of a robber and murderer by St. John the Evangelist is perhaps a more remarkable fact on our present subject, than any to be met with in authentic history: the following are the particulars as related by Eusebius (c). John beholding a young man of a comely person and gracious

98.  
It rendered its professors just honest men of truth.

(a) Lib: x, Epist: 97.

(b) Hist: Augustæ Scriptores, p. 132, Edit: Paris 1620.

(c) Hist: iii, 23.

countenance said unto a bishop, I earnestly recommend this young man to thy care. The bishop promised to be careful of him and in process of time baptized him: but idle and dissolute associates soon led him to steal, rob and commit murder. John having got information of his profligacy thus addressed the bishop: O bishop, restore unto us thy charge which Christ and I have committed unto thy custody; I require the young man and the soul of our brother. Then the elder, looking down with a dejected countenance, said with sighs and sobs he is dead. The apostle then asked how and by what kind of death? The bishop answered, he is dead to God; for he is become a profligate and a thief and dwells on wonder mountain with his wicked companions. The apostle, then rending his garment and beating his head with sorrow observed, I have committed our brother's soul to a wise keeper prepare me an horse and let me have a guide. Having come near the haunt of the thief he was seized on by their watch and exclaimed for this purpose came I hither, bring me to your captain! When the captain saw the venerable old man at some distance he was moved with shame and fled: St. John forgetting his years pursued him crying out why dyest thou from thy father who is aged and old? Be not afraid; as yet remaineth hope of salvation: I will instruct thee for thee with Christ; I will die for thee as he did for us: I will hazard my soul for thine, believe me Christ sent me. The young man hearing these words first bowed down casting his eyes on the ground, then raised his armour, anon trembled, embraced the old man and wept bitterly. The apostle

apostle, promising to obtain for him pardon from our Saviour, brought him to a church where he often prayed for him, mollified him by his exhortations and did not quit him 'till he shewed strong symptoms of repentance. The pious zeal of the other apostles must have reclaimed the profligate and rendered them honest in many instances not recorded in history. The following instance of truth and honour in a private person must be ascribed to Christianity: which instance however uncommon would never have been related were not the account of it connected with the history of a prince. In the 6th century Al Nooman king of Hira, in a drunken frolic, ordered two of his intoxicated companions to be burned alive. When sober he repented of his crime, and, in order to expiate the offence set apart two days in every year in honour of them, resolved to sacrifice on one of these days the first person he met, and to dismiss him whom he met on the other with magnificent presents. On one of those unfortunate days, the king was met by an Arab who had once entertained him when fatigued with hunting and separated from his companions. In gratitude for this favour the prince granted him a year's respite; provided he could find security for his returning from a distant province to suffer death at the expiration of the year. One of the prince's court in compassion offered himself as his surety, and the Arab was released. The Arab having appeared on the appointed day, the king asked him why he would offer himself to death when he might have escaped it by the death of his security? He replied he was taught to do so by the religion he professed. The king, having enquired about

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about his religion and found him a Christian, desired an explanation of the Christian doctrine, embraced the Gospel and totally abolished the barbarous custom (*d*). Hence we may perceive the vileness of Paganism and the good effects of Christianity even in a country where its precepts were deplorably corrupted. To enforce the duty of justice the emperors Charlemagne (*e*) and Lewis the Pious required their subjects to have just weights and just measures, according to the Mosaic law; and adopted the words of Solomon that divers weights and divers measures are an abomination to the Lord. We cannot suppose that the subjects of these and other religious princes would neglect the duties of justice and honesty which were recommended by their religion, by its teachers and by the laws of every nation which embraced the Gospel.

It rendered them patient and constant.

The Apostles (*f*) and Evangelists endured the most grievous sufferings rather than renounce their religion; nor could the primitive Christians who succeeded them be induced by threats or torments to desert their profession. They neither repined nor railed at their enemies; but endured various sufferings with invincible meekness. Polycarp a disciple of St. John zealously propagated the faith; for which he suffered martyrdom during the persecution of Verus and when he was near 100 years old. Having been brought before an enraged multitude, the proconsul asked

(*d*) Sales Prelimin. Discourse, sect. i.

(*e*) Lindenbrog: Capitula, lib. i, cap. 74.

(*f*) Caves Lives of the Apostles and Hammer's Preface to the Lives of Dorotheus.

him

whether he was the celebrated Polycarp, skoned to him to deny it and said, tender ne years, swear by the fortune of Cesar and ent; swear and I will let thee go, blasme and deny Christ. Polycarp answered, ar score and six years have I served him ither hath he ever offended me; and how n I revile my king? if thou requirest me

swear by the fortune of Cesar feigning ou knowest not who I am, hear freely I am Christian! And if thou desirest to know the hristian doctrines appoint the day and you all hear them. The proconsul having said rsuade the people; Polycarp replied, I have uchsafed to confer with thee; for we are mmanded to honour princes and potentates; ut I consider the furious multitude unworthy earsers of my defence. The proconsul anvered, I have wild beasts to devour thee unss you repent. Polycarp replied, bring them rth; for we Christians do not pass from bet- er to worse but from vice to virtue by re- entance. But saith the proconsul, I will uiet thee with fire if thou regardest not the casts nor repent. Thou threatenest fire, saith Polycarp, which lasteth a while and quickly is quenched; but thou art ignorant of the ever- asting torments reserved for the wicked. But why lingerest thou? dispatch as it pleaseth hee. He uttered these words with a counte- nance so firm and yet so placid that the pro- onsul was amazed and commanded the beadle o cry out thrice, Polycarp confesseth himself o be a Christian. At which words the mul- titude shouted with rage, this is the Doctor of Asia, the father of the Christians, the over- thrower of our Gods, who has taught that our Gods are not to be worshipped. There

was



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- was an unanimous cry that he should be burned; and the Jewish and Gentile populace zealously carried wood and prepared a pile for that purpose. When they would have nailed him to the stake he said, suffer me as I am; but that gives me patience to abide this fire will enable me to stay in the midst of it without nailing my body (g). When he offered up his prayers to God the pile was lighted; and the venerable man was consumed leaving an example of piety, patience and resignation to God. Tertullian (b) ascribes the propagation of the Gospel in some degree to the patience of the Christians; and tells Scapula, that all who beheld such patience could not but enquire into the cause, and when informed of the truth immediately embraced it. "Is it
400. "not" saith the Heathen in Minucius Felix, "a strange folly and incredible boldness to despise present torments, and yet fear those which are future and uncertain? so foolishly do they flatter themselves and lull their fears by a deceitful hope of some unknown comfort which shall arise to them hereafter."
430. In Maximin's reign men submitted to be burned, crucified, drowned, mangled or otherwise tormented rather than consent to idolatry; and in several instances females endured various torments rather than suffer themselves to be defiled (i). During Dioclesian's persecutions several nobles endured reproaches and torments rather than renounce Christianity: Petrus a page of the emperor was one of them. This man when publicly exhibited in Niccomedia and required to sacrifice refused to
- 484.

(g) Euseb. Hist: iv. 5.

(b) Ad Scapulam, cap. 52

(i) Euseb. Hist: viii. 15.

comply;

ply: in consequence of which an order  
issued that his body should be scourged  
his flesh torn to pieces to compel him to  
fo. When he had endured those torments  
h firmness and his bones lay bare, they  
rod vinegar mixed with salt into his fester-  
wounds. Having slighted all these tor-  
nts, his bare bones were laid on a gridiron  
r a slow fire, where he continued inflexi-  
and overcame his persecutors by his con-  
pt of sufferings and even of death. "Such  
ras the constancy of the primitive Chris-  
ians (saith Arnobius (*k*) that servants would 303;  
ather suffer torments from their masters,  
vives sooner part from their husbands, and  
hildren prefer being disinherited rather  
han abandon the faith of Christ." The  
peror Constantius Chlorus, to try the prin- 303;  
les of his courtiers and whether they were  
ere or nominal Christians, pretended an  
erison for Christianity and commanded  
em to sacrifice to the Gods on pain of  
ing dismissed. Some of them told him  
y must resign their employments and in-  
r *his* displeasure rather than the divine;  
hile others consented to sacrifice to the dei-  
s of the Pagans. The emperor, having  
de the wished-for discovery, applauded the  
mer for their constancy and integrity and  
mitted them to a share in the administra-  
n; but disbanded the latter with this reprim-  
nd, that they never could be true to their  
nce who were false to their God (*l*).  
hile Pollio was suffering for religion in  
oclesian's reign, he furnished an abridg- 299.

) Adv. Gentes, lib. i.  
) Euseb. Vita Constant: i, 11.

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ment of christian morality as then taught and practised by several Christians. Having been accused before the governor Probus of deriving gods of wood and stone, he confessed himself a Christian who in spite of torture would persist in fidelity to God and in obedience to the commands of Jesus Christ. Probus having asked him what these commands were? Polio replied, "those commands teach us there is but one God in heaven; that wood and stone are not to be called Gods; that we must correct our faults by repentance and persevere inviolably in the good we have embraced. Virgins who preserve their purity are exalted to an high rank; and wives are bound to maintain conjugal chastity and to make the procreation of children the sole end of the liberties they take with their husbands. Masters ought to rule their servants with mildness, and servants to discharge their duty rather from love than fear. We ought to obey kings and the higher powers whose commands are just and right. We should reverence those who gave us life, love our friends, forgive our enemies, bear an affection towards our fellow-citizens, humanity towards strangers, pity towards the poor and charity towards all men. We must do no injury to any person and patiently suffer the wrongs we receive. We ought to bestow our own goods liberally and not covet those of others; and believe he shall live eternally who in defence of his faith shall despise this momentary death, which is the utmost effort of your power" (1)

(1) *Acta Sancti*: in April xxviii, tom. 3d, Marsh's Library

The emperor Julian issued a proclamation that no person should bear an office who did not renounce Christianity and sacrifice to the gods. Jovian, Valentinian and Valens who were afterwards emperors refused to comply, threw down their sword-belts and said, they would suffer any kind of torment rather than deny their Saviour (*n*). Lactantius (*r*) observes that fire did not extort a groan from Christian boys and girls, and desires the Romans no more to boast of their Regulus and Scœvola. The lives of the Martyrs (*s*) may convince us that they exceeded Scœvola, Curtius, the Decii and other Pagan heroes in number and fortitude; as they did not lay violent hands on themselves but piously endured pain and death for righteousness (*t*) sake. The first Christians bore disgrace, torture and death rather than renounce their principles; while the Heathens wanted courage to exercise their religion in public, when the emperors established Christianity on the ruins of Paganism,

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Neither promises nor threats could induce several of the primitive Christians to violate their chastity. The Gospel condemns impure thoughts, threatens fornicators and declares, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. The Gospel threats must have had considerable influence on those who suffered on its account, attached to it only from a sense of its truth and a prospect of its rewards. History furnishes instances of persons who encountered dangers and endured

It promoted chastity and continence.

(*n*) Socrat: iii. 13.

(*r*) V: 13.

(*s*) See Ruinarts Acta martyrum.

(*t*) See Laurentius Valla de voluptate, Lib: ii.

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band(*t*). The Barbarian was so captivated w  
the virtue of the matron that he convey  
her to a place of safety, 'till she was deliver  
to her husband. The following is a strikin  
instance of female virtue. The Huns a fier  
600. nation having invaded Venice, some Lomb  
virgins made themselves fetid and so disgust  
the Barbarians by their offensive smell th  
they were sold as captives at a public auction  
two of them afterwards married two prin  
and obtained, as the annalist (*b*) observes, t  
reward of their virtue. Instances of the e  
ercise of this virtue are too numerous to  
recounted; but the following memorable o  
369 which was displayed in Yorkshire is too  
markable to be passed over in silence. El  
the abbess understanding that her nunn  
was to be attacked by the Danes called t  
gether her nuns, stated the character of th  
nation for lust and cruelty and informed th  
she was resolved to preserve her chastity at t  
expence of her beauty. Having uttered th  
words she cut off her nose and upper lip; a  
all her sisterhood followed her example. Th  
did not long survive their beauty; for wh  
the Danish generals saw their horrible app  
eance, they shut them up in the monastery a  
burned it to the ground(*u*). It is undenia  
that the Heathen matron Lucretia was chu  
to excess; as she submitted to death rat  
than survive her virtue; but it is equally  
deniable she valued her chastity less than  
reputation; as she sacrificed the former for  
preservation of the latter. She complied w  
the adulterer when he threatened to sta

(*t*) Sozom: ix. 10.(*b*) Baronius.(*u*) Math. Westmonast: Baron: Annal: A. D. 870.

have and to lay his naked body near her's after he had violated and murdered her (x). The Heathen committed adultery and suicide; the Christian matron only self-murder: the latter put herself to death for the prevention of a crime; the former to atone for it: the Heathen requested her father and husband to punish the adulterer; the Christian matron died without any expression of revenge. However we neither justify nor recommend those excesses of Heathens and Christians; nor dread imitations of them in this degenerate age. Some of those excesses were greater evils than compliances with the ravisher or seducer; and are produced only to shew, that the religious principle which guarded female virtue and restrained the carnal appetites in such extraordinary instances is capable of curbing them in ordinary cases, if duly impressed on the minds of its professors. Were the moderns more attentive to religion, it would operate powerfully in restraining their appetites; but where the religious principle is feeble it can not be expected to have much effect in curbing the passions. Were the religious principle forcibly inculcated on males and females the adulterer would be more despised than the injured husband; and the character of Joseph respected not ridiculed. This honourable man, who fled from his friends wife that wanted to corrupt him, would scorn to seduce her; to murder his injured friend who upbraided him for his perfidy; or to create discontent between a couple solemnly bound to be faithful to each other. Many fashionable men of the present days might wish their wives to be good Christians;

(x) Livy, Lib: i. cap: 58.

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but are so foolish as to deride or disregard religion which would render their wives virtuous and secure themselves from dishonour

Christianity improved the condition of females.

In the northern nations Heathen gods were held in high veneration; having supposed to possess divine qualities, to be able of predicting the event of a battle, healing wounds, interpreting dreams, raising storms and performing every function of fairy art (*w*). But in other nations gods were not thus revered. In hot climates they were regarded as mere instruments of pleasure; and this regard was divided among many others. The Asiatic nations always felt a passion of love without any esteem for the object; and made quick transitions from affection to jealousy, to indifference or to contempt. In the purest ages of Greece and Rome it was lawful to put female infants to death; on the decline of the Roman empire Heathen matrons were degraded creatures. According to the system of oppression which generally prevailed when the Gospel was promulgated the husband instead of being the friend of his wife was a tyrant over her; and the wife might naturally be expected, obeyed from principle of fear not of love, gratitude or sense of duty. Callicratidas (*x*) an Hebraean philosopher exhorted wives to bear with patience the infidelity of their husbands; since the privilege of fornication is allowed to men but not to women. The panegyrics on the sex in Greek and Roman authors may

(*w*) Tacit: de moribus Germ: cap. viii. Plut: de virtutibus mulierum Polyæn: Stratag: lib. i. Keysser de mulieribus dicis. Mallet North. Antiq: ch. xii.

(*x*) Luciani amores.

nce us, that woman was not held in respect; while they represent her as beautiful, graceful or fond, they rarely ascribe to her either moral or intellectual endowments unless to render her more an object of passion. The first work in which woman is pictured as a respectable character is the adventures of Theagenes and Chariclea; a Greek novel written by bishop Heliodorus about the end of the 4th century. The character of this virgin lady as drawn by the bishop is higher than any which is described by Heathen authors; as if his knowledge of Christianity had taught him that females are capable of high moral and intellectual endowments. He represents the heroine not only as a woman of virtue but of intellect; as possessing prudence, presence of mind, delicacy, chastity and unshaken fidelity to Theagenes to whom she was long betrothed. In the midst of dissolute lovers into whose hands they had fallen she preserves her chastity; in the midst of dangers she is collected; she firmly checks the importunity of Theagenes whom she loves to distraction and completely extricated him from all his difficulties. To Christianity females are indebted for many advantages: a mild spirit is favourable to the weaker sex; it has restrained the despotism of the male and actually protected woman from the tyranny of man in numerous instances some of which have been already exhibited. The Christian prince forbade married men to keep concubines (*m*), those severe annoyances to a virtuous wife; nor does the Gospel allow the privilege to the male which it withholds



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from the females. *Husbands love your wives* saith the Scripture, *and be not bitter against them.—Let every one of you so love his wife as unto himself.—Dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honour unto the head as unto the weaker vessel, and as being members of the body of the church, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, in whom the church is sanctified by the word of water with the word of the cross, that he might present to himself the church to himself, glorious without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, as he has cleansed by the word of water with the word of the cross, that he might present to himself the church to himself, glorious without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, as he has cleansed by the word of water with the word of the cross.* No such passages occur in the religion or laws of Heathen nations! The Scriptures consider woman as a rational being, a moral companion of man, bound to the same duties, and entitled to the same reward. The Pagan female retained her influence during youth and beauty; while a Christian woman who is held in respect for her sense and virtues may preserve that respect though old and deformed. Christianity tends to render males chaste, rational and desirable; discourses impurity and fornication those preventives of matrimony; and concubinage, adultery, polygamy those never failing sources of jealousy and discontent.

Gospel a source of kindness to the distressed.

Of all the Gospel virtues none has been more conspicuously displayed in the actions of its professors than tenderness to the distressed. The affection of the primitive Christians to each other was proverbial; the Heathens to say of them, how those Christians love another! During violent plagues which raged in the Roman empire, in Alexandria, Carthage, about the middle of the 3d century, the Christians displayed wonderful charity and attention to the distressed. Scarcely had the plague begun at Alexandria when the Heathens quitted their nearest relations leaving them half dead, or their deceased

unburied to be devoured by dogs. But the conduct of the Christians was the reverse: they tended the infected, cured some, comforted the expiring, closed the eyes and mouths of the deceased, washed and buried them; and at length they were treated in the same way by those who survived them. During a plague which raged in Carthage, Cyprian the bishop of that city visited his estate and exerted his eloquence in re-animating and consoling those who lost their friends, in preparing them to submit as be-coming Christians to that scourge of heaven, and in exhorting them to assist their neighbours in distress. He did not fly from his danger, but resolved to share their fate; and his example and exhortations had such an effect on them that they emulously visited the dis-affected and acted with such tenderness to-wards Heathens as well as Christians that their piety and benevolence were commended by all who were witnesses of their piety and benevolence (y). The first Christian emperor ordered Ursinus his lieutenant in Africa to give the Cilician bishop of Carthage a large sum for the poor; and, if that sum should be insuffi-  
cient, commanded Heraclides his treasurer to supply them with more (z). Syria, Cilicia and Thrace having been afflicted with a fa-  
tal and pestilence in the year 331; the same Christian prince sent 36,000 bushels of wheat to the bishop of Antioch, and a vast quantity of provisions to other bishops to distribute among widows, orphans and other indigent persons (a). The ancient Roman laws

a38.

Euseb: Hist: vii, 21, & ix, 8. Sozom. ii, 6, & Cyprian

Euseb: Hist. x, 6.

Theopanis Chronographia, p. 23.

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- allowed creditors to be cruel to debtors, and their mercy extended no further than prohibiting the former to load the latter with greater weight of chains than 15 pounds. Constantine abolished certain punishments inflicted on debtors; and directed jailors to treat their prisoners with tenderness and humanity (*m*). Cyril bishop of Jerusalem took the treasures and sacred ornaments of the church for the relief of a starving people (*n*) and some emperors of the East were prompted to acts of beneficence by the Christian religion. On the death of the emperor Justinian great riches devolved to Tiberius a pious prince who dispersed it liberally to the poor and needy. His mother Sophia Augusta having accused him of prodigality and impoverishing the treasury, the emperor replied, the treasury will not be empty provided the poor receive alms and captives are redeemed; that is the great treasure: for our Lord desires to lay up treasures in heaven where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal (*o*). Basililius (*d*) emperor of the East was also inclined to acts of charity by religious motives; having exhorted his son Leo to pity the widow tears and the cries of the orphan and to be bountiful to the poor as he expected mercy from God. Ethelwold (*e*) bishop of Winchester sold all the gold and silver vessels of his cathedral to relieve the poor who were starving during a famine; and observed

(*m*) Baron: 320, 330. An: Univ: Hist: vi p. 256 folio.(*n*) Sozom: iv, 24.(*o*) Baronii Annal: A. D. 582.(*d*) Scriptores Byzant: vol. xxii, p. 148—Edit: Venet:(*e*) Camden's Remains—Wife Speeches—Mabillon: Annot

there is no reason the senseless temples of God should abound in riches, while the living temples of the Holy Ghost starve for hunger." Even in the middle ages when Christianity was a good deal corrupted the monasteries, bishops and kings shewed considerable regard and tenderness for the necessitous. Several monasteries had an officer called *Eleemosynarius* who distributed their alms and was required to possess certain qualifications. He was to be pious that he might have compassion on the indigent, and mild to enable him to bear the importunity of solicitors. He was required to reserve the most delicate food for the feeble; and, if any should come who were ashamed to beg to give them their food separate from the rest. He was enjoined to search out with care the feeble and sick; and to console and give them what they stood in need of. In Rome, in England and in France they had officers of this kind to distribute their alms to the poor and needy (f). We challenge the unbeliever to point out among the ancient philosophers and lawgivers, in the polished ages of Greece or Rome, any thing equal to this little specimen of the charities of the dark ages when Christendom was in some degree involved in ignorance and barbarism!

Hospitality to strangers has been practised by Heathens; but was never recommended by any religion except the Mosaic and Christian. Our Lord observed that on the day of judgment he will say, *I was a stranger, and*

It encouraged hospitality to strangers.

(f) Thomassinus de Beneficiis, vol. i; and Du Cange vox *eleemosynarius*.

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*ye took me in*; thus declaring, that he accepted of our kindness to strangers as did himself. St. Paul desires the Hebrews to entertain strangers; and St. Peter recommends hospitality without grudging. Surely passages of Scripture were strong inducements to the practice of this virtue: nor can it be denied that they produced the desired effect in numerous instances. In the reign of the Christian emperor we find an instance of hospitality hardly worth mentioning; had been instrumental in converting an Heathen to the Christian religion. His name was *Armenius* a soldier in Constantine's army, who was hospitably entertained in a town of the Christians, who brought him and his company what they wanted for their convenience and comfort. When, says Pachomius, with wonder what was done, I learned they were Christians who were kind and civil to all but especially to strangers.

361. Julian (*q*) an Heathen emperor recommended to the Pagans to be kind to strangers, to the Galleans; and in the year 361 bishop Basil prevailed on the citizens of Caesarea to build an house for the accommodation of strangers (*r*). Chrysostom (*s*) bishop of Constantinople employed a part of the revenues of his see in building houses and exhorted its inhabitants to set apart a room in each house for the reception of the poor. The spirit of Christianity and the example of the primitive bishops induced many of their successors and of the monks to follow their example. Many monasteries for

(*p*) Baron: vol. iii, p. 163.(*q*) Epiph.(*r*) Thomassinus on the Hospitality of the Clergy.(*s*) Sozomen, Theodoret, Palladius.

the reception of strangers; and to some monasteries were joined particular houses for the entertainment of them. The laws of pious princes enjoined kindness to strangers. The emperor Charlemagne and several councils recommended hospitality to bishops, to the inferior clergy and to all orders of the people (t). A law (u) of this emperor commands every person to entertain strangers, and founds this law on the authority of Scripture; namely, because on the great day of account the Lord will say *I was a stranger and ye took me in*. A law of the Bavarians (w) forbids men to injure or molest a stranger; as the Lord hath said, ye shall not molest a stranger or a foreigner. Surely these laws were the effects of religion! Some pious ecclesiastics from Ireland built in France hospitals for the reception of the sick and of strangers (x); and in France in the end of the second race of kings were appointed officers to protect travellers, to entertain them and to build bridges for their safe and easy passage over rivers (y). In the year 1790 a number of pious Methodists of Bath formed a society called the Stranger's Friend Society, whose object was to relieve strangers, to search out those who pined in silence or were otherwise afflicted, without regard to nation, to sect or party. A sufficiency of evident distress is the recommendation and no other is required. At the first establishment of this society each member contributed weekly according to his abilities;

800.

(t) Thomassin: de Beneficiis, vol. iii, p. 622 & sequ.

(u) Lindenbrog: Capit: lib. i, cap. 75.

(w) Ib: Lex Baioar: tit. iv, cap. 14.

(x) Du Cange vox Hospitalia.

(y) Ib: Fratres Pontis.

and

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and the pious and humane plan was soon encouraged by others. Similar societies have been formed in various places, particularly in Dublin where the members were enabled to relieve 2284 families and 5244 individuals in the year 1800. Such were the effects of Christianity; the unbeliever cannot point out an instance of such benevolence in the history of the Heathens!

It was the  
parent of  
charitable  
institutions.

The charities of the Christians in founding hospitals and relieving distress are too many to be enumerated; nor can it be denied that to the Gospel Christendom is indebted for many pious establishments little known to the Gentile world. The Greeks and Romans paid but little attention to persons in distress, and were almost total strangers to hospitals and other charitable institutions. It is admitted that in Athens and in other Greek states they provided for the children of soldiers slain in battle (*p*): a practice which in military republics seemed to flow rather from policy than from tenderness or humanity. At Thebes the law allowed those who reared the children of the very poor a trifling sum; with the privilege of using them as slaves to repay them for their trouble (*q*). This law which prevented the exposure of infants seems to have been rather an effect of policy than the offspring of humanity; since it deprived men of their freedom and subjected them to a state of toil and servitude. The Greeks and Romans had no charitable buildings, until the humane spirit of Christianity encouraged alms-giving and laid the foundation of such buildings

(*p*) Arist: Polit. ii, 8.

(*q*) Ælian: ii, 7.

where-

forever it was adopted. In the Gospel . Matthew (r) they who fed the hungry, and the naked, visited the sick and the aged, entertained the stranger &c. were rewarded as having conferred favours on God: *When thou makest a feast, says our Lord (s), call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind—and thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.* Dorcas (t), a woman full of good works and alms-deeds, was restored to life by St. Peter who pitied the widow who wept at her death, and who *shewed him the coats and garments which she had made for the poor.* In a vision of Cornelius (u) he was informed by an angel that his prayers were heard because his alms had in remembrance in the sight of God. These and similar passages in the Gospels and epistles must have operated powerfully on all true Christians; and to the merciful spirit of such passages are to be ascribed the beneficence of the first Christians, and the charitable institutions in every part of Christendom soon after the establishment of the Christian religion. Syria, Cilicia and Thrace had been afflicted by a famine in Constantinople, he sent to the bishop of Antioch 500 bushels of wheat and a prodigious quantity of corn, oil &c. to other places for the relief of the poor, orphans, ecclesiastics and poor (m). From the Byzantine history (w) that there was no charitable building in Constantinople in the time of Arcadius and Honorius reigned near the end of the 4th century, in his history there is a description of the

Chap. xxv.

Acts ix.

(r) Luke xiv, 13.

(s) Acts x.

A. Univ. Hist. vol vi, p. 255.

Scriptores, vol. i & xxii.



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palaces, baths, granaries, theatres, harbour churches, prisons, work-houses, markets and other public edifices of Constantinople; but not one word of charitable buildings. Mark the happy change wrought on the condition of distressed persons in Greece in the course of a few centuries! Constantinople alone which had not one charitable house in the end of the 4th century contained afterwards above thirty for the accommodation of orphans, of foundlings, of the sick, of strangers, of beggars, of persons in a leprosy, of aged and poor persons and of other persons in distress (x). These houses were called *Orphanotrophia*, *Brephotrophia*, *Nesocomia*, *Xenodochia*, *Lobotrophia*, *Pandochia*, *Ptychia*, *Ptochotrophia*, *Penetotrophia* and *Gerontocomia*: Greek words expressive of the purposes for which these houses were instituted. As these charitable houses did not exist in Greece before the establishment of Christianity, those words do not occur in lexicons for interpreting the ancient Greek authors, but frequently in the writings of the Greek Christians and in the glossaries which explain them (y). In Rome where a martial spirit prevailed the generals and emperors paid extraordinary attention to the recovery of sick soldiers (z); but it does not appear that the state provided any charitable institution similar to those now established in Christendom. A writer (a) who describes all the buildings of ancient Rome does not mention a single house for the ac-

(x) Scriptores Byzant: vol. xxi. Constantinopolis Christiana lib. 13, p. 113—Edit. Venet.

(y) Vide Du Cange—Sauceri Thesaurus—Script: Byzant:

(z) Pitiscus, vol. ii, p. 1032, & Gravius, vol. x, folio p. 1048.

(a) Publius Victor & Rosini Antiq: lib. i.

accom-

accommodation of the sick or of persons in distress. It is true the word *Valetudinarian* is found both in Seneca (*b*) and Columella (*c*); but most commentators are of opinion that this word signified an infirmary in or near the houses of grandees for the sick servants of the family. The first person we read of that built an hospital for the poor was Fabiola (*d*) a rich widow who lived in the 4th century, who was so pious and humane that she fed them with her own hand and washed herself those sores which others could hardly look at. Hospitals soon multiplied after the establishment of Christianity; and in the western empire in the year 800 there were houses for the accommodation of the sick, of strangers, orphans, infants, old men &c. whose revenues the pious Charlemagne forbad to be alienated (*d*). Upon the whole it does not appear that there was any establishment in Pagan Rome for the reception of the poor or sick, the widow or the orphan, the foundling or the reformed prostitute: whereas in the 17th century there were twenty five magnificent houses in Rome for these and other charitable purposes (*e*). Certain monastic orders also paid extraordinary attention to the sick and needy. In Saxony and in the chief cities of Spain and Italy there were and probably are still for the relief of distress three religious orders, one of which was called the servants of the diseased (*f*). In France there was an order of females devoted entirely to nurse-tending the

(*b*) De Ira, lib. i, cap. 16, & Epist. xxvii, cum notis Lipsii.

(*c*) De re rustica.

(*d*) Hieron:

(*d*) Lindenbrog: Capit. lib. ii, cap. 29, and Du Cange Coenobochium.

(*e*) Bozius de Signis Ecclesiæ, p. 411.

(*f*) lb.

sick;

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1548.

sick ; concerning whom Voltaire (g) thus exclaimed with wonder and satisfaction. " How noble to see persons of the tender sex and distinguished by birth as well as by youth and beauty stoop to the meanest offices in the hospitals for wretches whose appearance is mortifying to human pride and shocking to humanity !" It would be tedious to recite all the instances of Christian beneficence which might be produced in Italy, Spain, Portugal and other Roman Catholic states: let it suffice to observe that the present Spaniards are charitable to an high degree, and that the charities of the Spanish bishops, tho' carried to excess, do honour to that order (x). In Protestant states also charitable institutions are numerous and well supported. An extraordinary act of national charity was exhibited in the reign of Edward VI. by the British Parliament who voted a tax for the maintenance of the poor : which tax has been considerably augmented by succeeding parliaments. English and Irish Protestants do not confine their charities to distressed persons of their own religion and country, but extend their beneficence to Roman Catholics and foreigners with that benevolent spirit which marks the true Christian. In the year 1755 one hundred thousand pounds were subscribed in England for the Roman Catholics of Lisbon who suffered by an earthquake ; English and Irish reformists subscribed for clothing French prisoners in 1758 ; and in 1781 large sums were subscribed in England and Ireland for the inhabitants of the West India islands whose properties were destroyed by a hurricane. In the

(g) Hist: cxviii.

(x) Townsend's Journey thro' Spain in 1786.

year 1792 English and Irish protestants subscribed for the relief of priests who fled to them from France where the clergy were persecuted for their zealous attachment to their religion and prince. Would to God I could specify instances in which Christianity prompted its Roman Catholic professors to act with equal benevolence towards Christians who differed from them in matters of religion! but neither my reading nor my experience furnishes such instances.

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Though slaves suffered less in Attica than in any ancient Greek state, yet it was a maxim of Plato (*k*) that no friendship could subsist between a master and his slave; and of Aristotle (*l*) that there can no more be a friendship between a tyrant and his subjects than between a master and his slave. We learn from a comedy of Aristophanes (*a*) a fact unnoticed by any ancient historian, namely, that in time of war a master was not allowed to be cruel to his slave; for we find an old gentleman of Attica reprobating the war because he was not permitted to beat his slaves. Slaves were oppressed more than usual all over Greece after it became a Roman province, and in Rome after the destruction of the republic. In this city the porters at the gates of grandees were chained slaves (*m*); and masters used to put aged, sick or infirm slaves into an island in the Tyber there to perish without pity or assistance (*n*). Slaves

It eman-  
cipates  
slaves.

(*k*) De Leg. lib. vi, p. 858—Edit. Frankf.

(*l*) De moribus, lib. viii, cap. 13.

(*a*) Nebulæ ipso initio—Mitsford's Greece, ch. xxi, sect. 1.

(*m*) Ovid: Amor: lib. i, eleg. 6, & Sueton. de claris rhetoribus.

(*n*) Sueton. in Claudio, p. 73—Edit. Paris, 1610.

having

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having been treated with severity every where at Christ's appearance must have derived considerable benefit from the mild genius of the Gospel. The first Christian emperor gave orders that slaves should be manumitted in churches, and allowed the ceremony of manumission to be performed on Sunday; though he prohibited any other work to be done on that day (*o*). The bishops and councils recommended mercy towards slaves and emancipated many of their own slaves as an example to others. In the end of the 6th century Gregory the Great liberated his own slaves (*p*) and dispatched forty monks to convert the English who had sent some youths to Rome to be sold in that city (*q*). This bishop emancipated his own slaves on a Christian principle and encouraged it in others on the same principle. "As our Redeemer," saith he, "took our flesh in order to free us from the slavery of sin, so should we restore to freedom those who were deprived of it by the law of nations." Even while Europe was involved in ignorance and barbarism, Christianity and its teachers promoted the emancipation of slaves. The benevolent spirit infused by the Gospel, by bishops and councils prompted several pious laymen to emancipate their slaves. Bernardus liberated his domestic slaves for the cure of his soul; and some kings of France did so in gratitude to the Deity for the birth of a son, the prolongation of life or for other favours received from God (*u*). In Lombardy if a person promised liberty to a slave for the benefit of

(*o*) Cod: Theod: lib. ii, tit. 3, p. 113—Edit. Gothof:

(*p*) S. Greg: Registrum Epistol: lib. vi, epist. 12, vol. ii, p. 800 Edit. Paris, 1700.

(*q*) Bede Hist: Eccl: lib. i, cap. 18 & lib. ii, cap. i prope finem.

(*u*) Du Cange vox Servus.

his soul but died before he had time to fulfil his promise, Rotharis the king granted him his liberty on the religious principle that Christ deigned to be a slave to purchase liberty for us (*w*). A law of Liutprand another king of the Lombards confirmed liberty to the slave who was liberated by his master in the church near the altar (*x*). The emperor Charlemagne (*y*) required manumission to be performed in churches, where the clergy performed this ceremony as they did baptism or marriage. Magnus Smeek made a circuit through Sweden to abolish servitude; and the following interdict proves he did so on a principle of religion. Let no Christian sell a Christian; for since Christ came he liberated all Christians (*z*). It took two years from the time that emancipation began till it was ended in Sweden; from the opposition of men who were interested in retaining it. When slaves were liberated on a religious account various forms were used of which the following are specimens. Whoever, says Rodobert, shall liberate a slave in the name of the holy Trinity may be sure of God's mercy; therefore I Rodobert emancipate Durandus, his wife, children, brother-in-law &c. Another form of religious emancipation was as follows: I Hugo liberate Raginaldus Belinus, his wife, children &c. for the redemption of the soul of my father Archemboldus. The following form was employed by a person who emancipated a slave: Since the Lord of the high and low deigned to the yoke of slavery to free men from diabolical servitude;

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644

700:

800.

1319.

(*w*) Lex Longob: lib. ii, tit. 18 cap. 3. (*x*) Ib: tit. 35.

(*y*) Lindenbrog: Leges Siculæ Seu Neapolitanæ.

(*z*) Stiernhook de jure Suecon: &c. p. 226, 227.

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I for the redemption of my soul and from a prospect of eternal happiness free this my servant A. B. and his descendants from servitude, and will that he pay servile obedience to none but God for whose love I free him. This form was evidently the fruit of religion; and the following is to be ascribed to it and the clergy. In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity I Odo king by the grace of God notify to all the faithful, that we from a love of God and a hope of future retributions and by the intercession of the bishop do emancipate the slave A. &c. (a) Du Cange (b) shews that slaves were emancipated for the love of God, for the redemption of souls and for the forgiveness of sins; and to this writer who has collected numerous instances of religious emancipation we refer those who desire more information on this point. We do not deny that men were often emancipated without the aid of religion or the clergy; but maintain that in some cases liberty obtained in this way was more secure than in any other. A law of Receswinthus (c) forbade manumitted slaves or their posterity to injure those who liberated them on pain of servitude. But if, says the law-giver, they have been manumitted on a religious account they shall not lose their liberty; for what has been done for the sake of God shall not be undone by men. What veneration then is due from all lovers of freedom to a religion which imparted liberty to thousands; though its influence had been checked by the feudal governments which subsisted in

650

(a) Du Cange vox Coliberti, manumissio, servus.

(b) Ib.

(c) Lindenbrog Lex Wisigoth. lib. iv, tit. 4.

Europe. It is to be lamented that in many cases nominal Christians have been prompted by self-interest or mistaken policy to act contrary to the spirit of the Gospel; but we should no more condemn religion for not restraining men in all cases, than censure our laws and the feelings of humanity because some are so depraved as not to be influenced by either.

Christianity not only contributed to emancipate many slaves but to render more easy the condition of those who continued in servitude. The opinion of the original equality of mankind and the humane spirit of the Gospel tend to abate the rigours of servitude. Christianity informs us that God is no respecter of persons, and condemns a regard for the rich and a contempt for the poor on account of the circumstances of fortune. "If there come to your assemblies, saith St. James (d), a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing and say unto him sit thou here in a good place, and unto the other sit thou here under my footstool, are ye not then partial to yourselves? Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he hath prepared for them that love him." Lactantius (e) observes that the faithful are to consider their slaves as brethren; and that tho' in their external condition they be our slaves yet we are to reckon them and speak of them

It abated  
the ri-  
gours of  
servitude.

(d) Chap. ii.  
(e) Lib. v, cap. 5.



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as spiritual brothers and fellow-servants in religion. The Heathen philosopher was a stranger to such ideas! To abate the rigours of servitude the 4th commandment requires an observance of the Sabbath, and pious princes enforced this commandment in their political constitutions. Let no man, says a law of the Alemanni (*f*), do servile work on the Lord's day; because this is prohibited by the law and the Gospel: and in the 7th century Ina a pious king of England released a slave from the jurisdiction of that master who required him to work on the Sabbath day (*g*). A law of Egica a king of the Visigoths was favourable to slaves; which law is founded on a principle of religion. I Flavius Egica (*b*), says this lawgiver, prohibit a master or mistress to cut off the hand, nose, ear, lip &c. of a slave, to pluck out his eye or maim any part of his body; lest the image of God should be polluted by human cruelty. According to the Capitulars (*i*), if a master struck out the eye or the tooth of his slave he was made free; which law was borrowed from the Mosiac code that now makes a part of the Christian system. Those Capitula require superiors to treat with mercy the noble and ignoble, slaves and husbandmen, foreigners and men of different conditions; since all are brethren and children of one parent whom they address in prayer.

It check'd  
the sale of  
men.

We may reasonably conclude that Christianity which contributed to emancipate slaves

(*f*) Lindenbrog: cap. xxxviii p. 373.

(*g*) Wilkins Leges Anglofaxonice p. 14.

(*b*) Lindenbrog: Lex Wisigoth: lib. iv tit. 5.

(*i*) Ib: lib. vi cap. 14.

and

and to abate the rigours of servitude, also restrained men from buying and selling their fellow-creatures: which was a common practice among the French, English, Swedes and other nations. This vile practice was checked by bishops, councils and pious kings. In France queen Bathildis (*k*) prohibited the custom of selling men who were redeemed by Christ's blood: and in England the council of Enham (*l*) forbade selling innocent Christians out of the kingdom at least to Pagans; lest their souls should be destroyed which were redeemed by Christ's blood. The sale of men was prohibited by a London council where Anselm presided (*m*); and a council in Waterford (*n*) ordered all Englishmen bought or sold in Ireland to be made free. The Swedes, having been taught by their clergy that men who were to be partners with them in eternal glory should not be enslaved, were easily persuaded that servitude was inconsistent with Christianity; and some pious kings of Sweden devised various means of abolishing it by degrees without injuring the masters. Cardinal Gunhelms Sabinensis who visited Sweden in the reign of Eric Blefus inveighed against making slaves or holding men in slavery: and Bergeus the son of Magnus absolutely prohibited the buying or selling of men (*o*). The ecclesiastics of those days laboured for emancipation; nor are the modern clergy deficient in this respect as far as their influence extends. The English bishops, several of the clergy

578.

1070.

1102.

1158.

1223.

1292.

(*k*) Thomass: vol. ii p. 833.

(*l*) Wilkins ib. p. 120.

(*m*) Eadmer Novorum lib. iii p. 64 & Thomass: vol. ii p. 222.

(*n*) Ib. p. 223.

(*o*) Stiernhook de jure Sueonum p. 226.

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as spiritual brothers and fellow-religion. The Heathen philosopher ger to such ideas! To abate the servitude the 4th commandment observance of the Sabbath, and enforced this commandment in constitutions. Let no man, Alemanni (f), do servile work day; because this is prohibited the Gospel: and in the 7th king of England religious jurisdiction of that man to work on the Sabbath.

386. Egica a king of the to slaves; which law ple of religion. this lawgiver, pr. cut off the hands to pluck out body; lest the hands of the luted by broke the sacred Capitulars gives and relieving the or the to which code the systerr treat and er. for the purpose, and if there sho overplus requires them to employ i table uses. We find admirable Christianity even where controversy as much as the spirit of the God

†: check  
the false  
men.

(f) Fasti; Epist. cccx. p. 1003. Edit: Paris:  
(g) De officiis, Lib. ii. cap: 28.  
(h) Vita per possidium.  
(i) Patricii opuscula a Ware, p. 41.

persecuted his Christian  
of the magi; some  
the Romans who  
them when de-  
occasioned  
been vic-  
were  
ation-  
shop of  
the following  
need either of  
her eateth nor  
his necessaries.

Church hath many  
gold and silver bestowed  
aul, it is requisite the cap-  
ould be liberated and they who  
g with famine refreshed and re-

Having thus spoken he sold the  
plate, redeemed the captives, main-  
them 'till they were able to travel, gave  
on their travelling expences and sent them

come to the Persian king who was astonished  
at the generosity and charity of the Chris-  
tians and ashamed no doubt of having perse-  
cuted such a religion. We find a very  
remarkable instance of the kindness of the  
Christians towards captives about the middle  
of the 5th century. The Vandals having  
sacked and pillaged Rome returned to Car-  
thage with a multitude of captives. When  
the captives were landed on the African shore  
husbands were separated from their wives and  
children from their parents. We may judge  
of the wretched situation of those captives

455a

(b) Socrate Hist. vii. 21.

had

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had not the Christian spirit prompted **Des**  
**Gratias** bishop of Carthage to sell the church  
plate for their redemption. Having no ac-  
commodations for them in the city, he filled  
the churches with beds, brought physicians to  
visit the sick, sent them food and though old  
and infirm went every night to enquire into  
their wants (*u*). The laws of Justinian al-  
527. lowed churches to alienate their estates for the  
redemption of captives (*w*). Gregory the  
526. Great declared it as sinful to spare the sacred  
utensils during a pressing necessity as to sell  
them where there was no occasion (*x*). The  
530. council of Rheims (*m*) forbade bishops to break  
the sacred vessels except for the redemption  
of captives. The practice of redemption pre-  
vailed in the northern kingdoms in the end of  
the 9th century. Rembertus (*y*) a disciple of  
Ansgarius and a pious man spent most part of  
his income and sold even the sacred utensils  
for the redemption of captives. Having been  
censured for the latter he thus defended him-  
self. "I am not ignorant of the respect  
" which is due to the sacred vessels which  
" were deposited with me; but I know it is  
" more acceptable to God to succour the  
" distressed than to keep the deposit, and that  
" we never shall want what may serve in the  
925. " sacred office." In England Athelstan (*z*)  
by the advice of the bishops commanded each  
of his deputy governors to redeem one slave  
annually at his expence, for the love of God  
and for the remission of his sins. For several

(*u*) Victor Vitenfis de Persecutione Africana lib. i p. 89.

(*w*) Novell: cxx cap. 19.

(*x*) G. eg: Epist. lib. vii epist. xxxviii.

(*m*) Canon xxii.

(*y*) Adam: Brem: Hist: p. 28 & Mabill: Annal: 865.

(*z*) Wilkins Leges Anglofax: p. 56.

centuries bishops and councils (a) forcibly recommended the redemption of captives: nor has the zeal for that pious work been ever extinguished in Christendom. The monks called Trinitarians constitute an heroic society for the very purpose of redeeming captives. These monks have for above five centuries devoted themselves to the redemption of Christian slaves from Moorish servitude, and paid their ransoms out of the revenues of their order and out of the alms which they received and carried in person to Africa. John of Matha, who flourished in France in the end of the 12th century, was the founder of this order. At an early age he had a turn for piety and took particular pleasure in visiting the hospitals and in cleansing and binding up the wounds of the patients. His parents having been opulent, he formed a design of employing his time and fortune for the ransom of Christians oppressed by slavery. Having communicated his intentions to Pope Innocent the 3d. and to other bishops; they all approved of his pious scheme and this order was instituted for the relief of oppressed slaves. Philip II. of France and others contributed largely to this benevolent work; and it was afterwards promoted in Spain by the liberal contributions of the princes and nobles. In the year 1200 the order was enabled to redeem 186 Christians at Morocco; and in Barbary alone no less than 110 slaves were liberated the following year (d). This order has continued its pious exertions from that time to the present; and in Ireland in the

(a) See Thomassin: tom. iii p. 563 & sequ.

(d) See Epist. of Innocent III. lib. ii epist. 9.

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year 1793 two members of this order collected near three thousand pounds for this benevolent purpose. In Spain also in the beginning of the 13th century Peter Nolasco a man of fortune exerted himself in forming another order for the redemption of Christian slaves; and was joined by other gentlemen in this charitable work. His scheme was approved of by the king and nobles, and called the order of our Lady of Mercy for the redemption of captives. In two expeditions to Grenada and Valentia for this purpose, the founder of this order redeemed 400 slaves, and the number which has been annually redeemed by this order are a strong proof of the piety of the institution.

It protected  
widows  
& orphans  
against violence  
and  
injustice.

When the clergy came into power many of them exerted it in relieving widows, orphans and other persons in distress. Ambrose and Auslin did so in the end of the 4th century. The latter (*p*) recommended to bishops the care of pupils and orphans; and Ambrose not only directed the clergy to protect widows and orphans against the powerful, but observed that he himself more than once undertook their defence. "You add splendour to your ministry," says this pious prelate (*q*), "if you support widows and orphans and show more regard to the divine commands than to those of a rich man: Christ who was their tutor and avenger has transferred this power to his ministers on earth." In the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries the Italian bishops

(*p*) Epist. cccxvi.

(*q*) Ambros. de Officiis lib. ii cap. 29.

clergy zealously defended widows and orphans; and Gregory the Great offered to assist the bishops of his time in this pious work, where any difficulty occurred which they were unable to surmount. Gregory recommended the widow Luminosa to the protection of Centumcellensis, and wrote to archbishop Januarius to aid two particular widows, and to punish those who injured or molested them (r). Gregory sent two nuncios to distant provinces to protect widows and orphans, especially pious and noble women who had received insults at the decease of their husbands (s). Pepin appointed guardians to protect widows and orphans against injustice and oppression, and required them to be men who feared God: wisely judging that men of religion were more fit for this office than if they were regardless of its doctrines and motives. Emperors Charlemagne and Lewis the Pious required magistrates and prefects in the provinces to co-operate with the bishops in assisting the weak; and had an officer called *av Palatin* whose chief duty it was to attend to the grievances of the distressed (t). The council of Mayence (u) recommended the laity to assist the bishops in defending widows and orphans; and the 6th council of Paris (v) decreed that the king ought to protect the Church, widows, orphans and all persons in distress. The clergy of those days represented kings as the ministers of God and maintained an opinion, that a prince could not

590.

754.

800.

830.

817.

829.

Thomass: vol. ii p. 836.

Greg: Epist. lib. v epist. 37.

Capital: lib. ii cap. 6.

Thomass; vol. ii p. 840.

Ib.



CHAP. III. perform a duty more acceptable to God  
 relieving the distressed, and punishing  
 who injured or oppressed them.

It protect-  
 ed orphan  
 princes a-  
 gainst  
 usurpers.

Christianity and its teachers relieved  
 kind of distress and restrained the attempt  
 men who wished to usurp the rights of  
 The 10th commandment forbids us to  
 any thing which belongs to our neighbor  
 and the following instances will evince  
 when the clergy came into power they  
 interposed to see that this law was duly  
 ed. The bishops and councils exercised  
 pious office of protecting the kingdom  
 properties of princes, especially orphan  
 against the encroachments of usurpers.  
 wards the end of the 4th century bishop  
 brose dissuaded Maximus from seizing  
 crown of Valentinian who was in his  
 and when the emperor Maximus after  
 charged him with having done so, he  
 him it was the duty of a bishop to  
 royal orphans (\*). In the 6th, 7th and  
 centuries several councils and bishops fol-  
 his example in protecting the children of  
 688. ceased kings. The 15th council of  
 made decrees for the protection of the  
 Ervigius and prohibited any man to as-  
 the marriage of the queen dowager.  
 693. 16th council of Toledo committed the  
 children of kings to the patronage of  
 shops, and threatened those who con-  
 against them with degradation and serv-  
 694. The 17th council protected the  
 daughters of king Egica; by denouncin-  
 clesiastical censures against such as enter-

(\*) Epist. Ambr: xxv classis 1.

designs against the lives, liberties or properties of his children (y). Lewis the Stammerer committed his two young sons to the protection of Pope John VIII. who wrote to the counts of France to keep them firm in their obedience to those princes (a). King Edgar having died when his son Edward was thirteen years old; his title was acknowledged by the chief nobles of England and the fixed on for his coronation. Elfreda his mother opposed his succession, and formed a party to prevent his coronation when the people were assembled for the purpose. But instant arch-bishop of Canterbury prevented the design, by stepping forward in the midst of the illustrious assembly, exhibiting the prince as the lawful heir, going on with the coronation service and promising to be answerable for the good conduct of the king. When Ladislaus king of Hungary was dying, he left his young son to the guardianship of Pope Leo X. to protect him against usurpation (c). The extraordinary respect at first paid by kings to bishops took its rise from their piety and virtues; and all bishops were formerly called *papæ* or fathers on account of paternal regard which they shewed to the oppressed. The arch-bishops of Rome assumed this title almost exclusively and accosted kings as their children (d); nor can it be denied that they often acted as fathers to dowry queens, to orphan princes and to distressed monarchs.

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III.

870.

975-

1516.

(y) Thomass: tom. ii p. 834, 835, 836 & sequ.

(a) Ib. p. 847.

(c) Raynaldi Annales 1516, n. 61, 62, & Thomass. tom. ii 51.

(d) Du Cange vox. *Papæ & Filios*.

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It protected  
monarchs  
against re-  
bels and  
usurpers.

- The teachers of Christianity always considered it their duty to assist the weak or distressed, and often interposed to protect unfortunate kings against rebels and usurpers. Councils and bishops were a sanctuary to kings and restrained their subjects in obedience to the laws and to authority in many instances.
671. The 4th council of Toledo anathematized some ambitious and turbulent men who conspired against their king; and the 6th confirmed former decrees for his defence against conspirators and usurpers (*m*). Gregory IV, restored king Lewis who was banished from France (*e*); the metropolitans and barons anathematized those who rebelled against Charles the Simple; and the council of Ingelheim smote with the spiritual sword the rebellious subjects of Lewis IV (*f*). While those councils were anathematizing the turbulent they warned the king that Christ condemns those princes who tyrannize over their subjects: in even they did in many instances though not always conduct themselves between the prince and the subject, between tyranny and rebellion! Raynaldus mentions several instances in which bishops protected sovereigns against rebellious subjects in Bohemia, Spain, Scotland, England, Denmark and Hungary towards the end of the 15th century. Councils also employed their influence to restrain the encroachments of men who wished to usurp the rights of others. The council (*g*) of Soissons wrote to all the bishops of Britain to recall Salomon the usurper of a province
- 833.

(*m*) Thomaff: tom ii p. 835.

(*e*) Baron: A. D. 834 tom ix p. 830.

(*f*) Thomaff: vol. ii p. 759.

(*g*) Canon viii & sequ.

obedience to Charles the Bald: and the council of Toul solicited Nicholas I. to pronounce ecclesiastical censures against that emperor unless that province returned immediately to its allegiance. Adrian II. protected the possessions of Lewis II. who was at war with the Saracens against Lewis king of Hungary who was going to seize on them. John I. exhorted the German bishops to use their influence to prevent the king of Germany from seizing on the kingdom of Charles the Bald; and observes that he would ill deserve the name of Christ's Vicar who did not restrain the oppression of princes who wished to invade the property of others (*m*). Fulco bishop of Rheims wrote to the Roman pontiff to assist Charles the Simple against King Otho who was going to usurp his dominions. The Pope having written to the Gallic bishops to inflame them against the usurper; but Herebert who had Charles in confinement wrote to the Pope that he released him from his obedience to the commands of his Holiness (*n*). The emperor Henry III. having complained to the council of Tours of the king of Spain who assumed the title of emperor the council anathematized him and obliged him to relinquish his usurped title (*o*). Alfonso king of Castile who was deposed by his son Sancius applied for protection to Martin IV. The Roman pontiff wrote to the Spanish bishops to exclude the usurper and his party from the communion, and even exhorted the king of France to assist the deposed prince against his undutiful son (*p*).

CHAP. III.

860.

862.

870.

925.

1055.

1283.

(j) Thomass: tom: ii p. 847.

(k) Ib.

(o) Ib. p. 851.

(p) Raynald: Annal: 1283. n. 28, 55, 56.

When

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III.

In consequence of the protection afforded to deposed or distressed kings by the bishops of Rome, the kings of Hungary, Scotland, Portugal, Poland, Arragon &c. subjected their kingdoms to the Popes; and expected in return their patronage against their own rebellious subjects or against foreign princes. (g) In process of time popes tyrannized over kings, and would not suffer any to exercise tyranny but themselves: which served to protect weak princes, before the balance of power was established in Europe.

It protect-  
ed subjects  
against ex-  
action and  
oppression.

The spirit of Christianity condemns tyranny and oppression; but its teachers wanted influence to check either until it was established by Constantine. Then indeed it produced many happy effects which it could not have produced before that period: such as restraining the exactions of kings or their deputies, checking piracy and the plunder of shipwrecked persons and putting an end to several practices which were allowed by the laws of many nations. The emperor Constantine issued an edict worthy of a Christian prince, requiring the governors of provinces to be impartial to the rich and poor, prohibiting exaction on his subjects and severely threatening extortioners and oppressors (r). When the bishops acquired influence with princes, they undertook the pious office of acquainting them with the sufferings of their subjects from the extortion of ministers and the governors of provinces. Zeal and christian charity prompted Germanus bishop of Auxerre to undertake a laborious

450.

(g) Thomass: vol. iii. p. 120.

(r) Barou: A. D. 313. A. D. 331.

journey by sea and land to alleviate the distresses of his citizens who were oppressed by unusual tribute; and his zeal and labour were crowned with success (*s*). Theodoret bishop of Cyrus informed the empress Pulcheria with the wretchedness of the peasants who suffered such exactions in one of the provinces, that many of them ran away and left the ground uncultivated (*t*). Bishop Meroveus prevailed on Childebert 2d to lighten the taxes on the poor, on widows and orphans; and Gregorius Turonensis another eminent bishop restrained exactions on the people (*u*). Gregory the Great addressed Phocas to ease the heavy burden of taxes which he imposed on his subjects, and reminded him that Gentile princes ruled over slaves but Christian kings over freemen (*w*). The latter Gregory exhorted the bishop of Gallipoli to protect the peasants of his diocese against new exactions; and on another occasion wrote to the exarch of Africa to rescue the people of Sardinia from the oppression of Theodorus the duke of that island (*x*). He acquainted the empress Constantia that the rustics of Corsica could hardly pay the tribute which was imposed on them; and advised her to tell the king that such things would bring down the wrath of heaven on her and on her children. The emperor having alleged that those taxes were levied for the defence of Italy against the Lombards; the pope maintained that their swords were not so formidable as the rapacity of officers, that offences against God and man were but feeble defences against his enemies, and that

440.

580.

590.

596.

(*s*) Thomass: tom: ii p. 829.

(*t*) Ib. p. 831.

(*u*) Ib. p. 837.

(*r*) Ib.

(*w*) Ib. p. 752.

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- he himself would be guilty of a crime for which he would be accountable to God if he was silent to the emperor about so great evils (y). Euphronius, Autregisillus and other bishops restrained oppressive taxes in their respective districts; and the 5th council of Pisto forbade any tribute to be exacted but such as were paid in the reign of Guntran (y). The 3d council of Tours addressed prayers and complaints to Charlemagne, lamented the hardships which many endured from extortion and recommended to his imperial majesty an enquiry into and a remedy for those evils. In the 9th century bishop Hincmar exhorted Lewis king of Germany not to suffer any new burdens to be laid on his subjects, and reminded him of some of his illustrious ancestors whose palaces, hands, ears and treasures were ever open to the distressed (g). The council of Tholouse recommended that no new tribute should be raised and that such as were laid on for the preceding thirty years should be taken off (b). Honourius IV. forbade exaction in the kingdom of Naples unless the kingdom was invaded, for the ransom of the king's son and portioning his brothers, sisters or children. The council of Bezan anathematized those who imposed new tribute or encreased the old; and the decree of this council was afterwards renewed in the council of Albi. These are but few of the many instances in which French ecclesiastics interfered to restrain exaction: nor were the Spanish clergy deficient in that respect. The 4th council of Toledo with the approbation of

(y) Thomass: tom ii p. 752. (f) Canon xlv

(g) Ib: p. 837 &amp; seq. (b) Ib: p. 848.

(e) Du Cange Auxilium pro defensione regum.

Recharedus desired the bishops to define the tribute the people could bear without exaction, to prescribe the form of levying without exaction, and to require the collector to restore to the subject whatever they levied beyond the prescribed form (a). To prevent a king from oppressing his subjects by the 8th council of Toledo recommended frugality rather than liberality, forbade him to transfer to his heirs any property what he possessed when he ascended the throne, and decreed that the overplus should go into the treasury and employed by his monarch in lightening taxes on the people.

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Ervigius having forgiven all the tribute due by his subjects owed prior to his reign; the 13th council of Toledo returned him thanks for his generosity and excommunicated any person who should oppose his decrees (a). Ximenes arch-bishop of Toledo lightened the taxes on the people and moderated the exaction of the collectors, by pressing on the king to allow each district to elect its own collector who would be likely to exact less than those appointed by the government (b). However it should be observed that in most cases the clergy exerted themselves in lessening exaction, with the consent and approbation of the king whom they pressed on to interpose for the relief of the oppressed. Nor were they less zealous in checking the oppression of the powerful in other respects. Chrysostom displayed great courage against the empress Eudoxia, in support of a widow whom she intended to rob on

683.

1506.

Thomas: tom ii p. 834.

Ib: p. 835.

Ib: p. 851.



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the following occasion. As this empress ~~per~~ ambulated the country, she came to the vineyard of a widow and plucked a grape; the law having adjudged her the vineyard on paying a certain sum to the proprietor. The pious bishop reprobated the law with zeal and intrepidity and thus ran the risque of persecution, of banishment or of death (*b*). Many bishops of those days could not be terrified by such considerations from the discharge of their duty; but zealously defended the poor against injustice or oppression. The 2d council of Mascon threatened to excommunicate the ministers of kings who unjustly invaded the houses or lands of the poor: and ~~king~~ Guntran who convened that council not only confirmed this decree but allowed them to control the dukes, presidents of provinces or generals of armies where they acted contrary to justice or humanity (*c*). The 4th council of Toledo determined it to be the duty of bishops to defend the poor against the violence of the rich, to chastize corrupt judges and to acquaint the king if they continued obstinate; and made the bishops responsible to the council if they neglected their duty in any of these points (*d*). The capitula (*e*) of Charlemagne and Lewis the Pious enjoin bishops to intercede for those who suffered oppression, and threaten to excommunicate those judges or powerful persons who oppressed the poor if they did not desist when admonished by the bishops. The Irish having been oppressed by Edward I. complained to the pope of

(A) Baron: A. D. 410.

(i) Thomass: vol. ii p. 831.

(j) Lib: vi cap: 266.

(A) Ib: p. 834.

the hardships they endured. The pope wrote to Edward to remind him of the conditions on which Adrian IV. granted Ireland to Henry II. namely, that he should administer the kingdom with justice and clemency (*m*). The exemplary piety and virtues of many bishops during several centuries gained them influence which afterwards proved injurious in the hands of men who were destitute of both.

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2318.

The first Christian emperor directed the judges to dispatch the causes of criminals &c. In the 6th and 7th centuries the Spanish kings had such confidence in the bishops that they required them to watch the judges and to rescind their decrees (*r*) where they were unjust or unmerciful. When a poor man had a suit with a powerful person, a law of Chindaswinthus (*s*) forbade the latter to commit his cause to one more powerful when he did not act for himself; nor were the following laws of Receswinthus (*t*) less indulgent to the poor. As it is our duty, says this pious law-giver, to relieve the miseries of the distressed; if there should be a lawsuit between a nobleman and a poor man, let a bishop interpose as an advocate for the latter. But if the nobleman did not abide by the decision of the bishop, he was required to give the bishop a fifth of the property in question. The bishop who delayed or neglected this duty or was partial to the nobleman was fined; if it appeared that he withheld justice from the poor man. Let the priests, says this legislator, to

It assisted the weak against the powerful in suits at law.

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(*m*) Raynaldi Annales A. D. 1317.

(*r*) Thomass: vol. ii.

(*s*) Lex Wisig: lib: ii p: 37.

(*t*) Ib: cap: 30.

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- whom God has committed the protection of the poor and oppressed piously exhort the judges who have decided wrongfully against the wretched to amend their sentence by a more righteous judgment. If the judge refuse to comply, let the bishop summon the clergy or other good men and settle the matter with the judge by a common sentence. But if the judge should perversely adhere to his unjust decree and refuse to amend it, then let the bishop of the place finally determine.
2440. John II. of Arragon a valiant, pious and moral prince in some cases devoted pecuniary fines to the use of the poor, and recommended expedition in deciding lawsuits and administering justice as acceptable to God (*m*). In France also the bishops not only relieved the necessities of the poor, but rebuked those judges who presumed to oppress them (*n*).
525. The 2d council of Malcon required the bishops to be the judges and avengers of widows, orphans and distressed persons, and forbade lay judges to determine causes until they gave notice of their decision to the chief ecclesiastic of the place (*x*). Gregory of Tours
590. complimented bishop Maurilio for relieving the poor and zealously defending them against wicked judges (*m*); and the emperor Charlemagne forbade the justices to despise the cries of widows, orphans and pupils; but to hear them with attention (*y*). Lewis the Pious warns judges to take care what they did; since they do not exercise the judgment of

(*m*) Masisei. lib: xii.(*n*) Thomaff: vol: ii p: 831.(*x*) Ib.(*m*) Thomaff: torn: ii p: 833.(*y*) Capitul: lib: iii cap: 2.

men but of God, and founds his admonition on scripture authority. Let no Christian judge, says this lawgiver (a), exact or receive gifts from any person for any decree; since the scriptures declare, that a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise and pervert the words of the righteous. But the bishops and pious princes not only required judges to be just and merciful but quick in their decisions. The emperors Charlemagne and Lewis the Pious directed an officer called *Comes Palatii* to take care that the causes of widows, orphans and poor be determined with equity and expedition (d). Boleslaus I. of Poland (m) a pious, just and magnanimous prince protected the feeble against the oppression of the powerful, furnished them with patrons where they were poor or ignorant, and left behind him the following memorable saying, that he would prefer dining on a fowl and administer justice to all than on the greatest delicacies where the powerful oppressed." The emperor Frederick another religious prince prescribed to judges the following order in hearing or determining causes. They were to hear first the causes of the church, then those of the king, after these the causes of widows, orphans, pupils and other weak persons, after which the causes of other litigants were to be decided. This prince commanded the judges to allow but two days for arguing points, and obliged those who delayed causes to pay the expences of the suit. This mode was preferable to that in other places, where the

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83a.

990a

1230a

(a) Ludov: Imperatoris Capitul: Additio 2d p: 1150, 1165 Lindenbrog.

(d) Capitul: lib: iv cap: 16 & passim vide Baluzii Capitul.

(m) Curei Annales Silesiæ p. 77.

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poor were in a great measure excluded from the benefit of the laws and sure of being defeated in suits with the powerful. This emperor allowed advocates gratis for widows, orphans, pupils or poor in suits with the powerful, maintained them during the continuance of their suits, and exempted them from the fees which were usually paid to courts (e). This practice was worthy the imitation of other Christian tribunals and prevails at present in many parts of Christendom. After this emperor had finished his laws he acknowledged that he began and ended them to the praise and glory of God and from the hope of the divine favour. Many bishops were so attentive to the duties of justice and mercy that pious princes entrusted them with a considerable share of power to accomplish these ends. In many cases they were allowed to superintend the judges and to see whether their decisions were just and merciful; and frequently determined where the judges were absent or voluntarily delayed judgment. They performed the double part of civil judges and overseers of their flocks; the former of which powers gave rise to ecclesiastical courts which were afterwards extremely useful in suggesting excellent regulations in civil tribunals (f).

And protected the shipwrecked against plunderers.

In former times kings or the lords of lands on the sea shores used to seize on the goods of wretched vessels driven to their coasts; and in some cases not only the goods and ships but the men on board belonged to the king.

(e) *Leges Longob.* lib: ii tit: 52 Lindenbrog.

(e) *Constitutiones Siculæ* seu Neapolitanæ Lindenbrog.

(f) *Du Cange* *vox Curia*.

and to the proprietors of those lands (*g*). The universality of this barbarous practice appears from the answer of the emperor M. Antoninus the philosopher to men who complained to him of their sufferings in this way. Some who had been shipwrecked in the Egean sea and plundered in the Cyclades having petitioned this emperor for redress; the emperor replied that though he was lord of the world yet was this the law every where (*b*). The humane spirit of the Gospel and the exertions of its teachers alleviated the sufferings of distressed mariners as they relieved other kinds of distress. Epiphanius bishop of Salamis spent his whole fortune in relieving the distressed, especially those who suffered by shipwreck (*l*): and the first Christian lawgivers made laws for their relief (*m*). The canon law excommunicated those who plundered shipwrecked persons (*n*); Christian divines severely threatened those who detained their goods and declared the vile practice was not to be excused by the customs of any country (*o*). Ethelred, Edward the Confessor and other religious kings of England took pains to abolish this custom, recommended kindness to distressed mariners and threatened to punish those who molested them (*p*). Richard I. for the love of God and for the salvation of his own and his parents' souls, enacted that the shipwrecked should not be stripped of

160.

368.

980:

1040:

1189.

- (*g*) Du Cange vox Lagan, Ejectus, Wreckum.
- (*h*) Ibid: & Hoffman's Lexicon vox naufragium, navis fracta & Lex Rhodia.
- (*i*) Sozom: vii, 26.
- (*m*) Cod: Theod: de naufragiis.
- (*n*) Lindenbrog: Gloss: art Lex Rhodia de jacturis.
- (*o*) Summula Raymundi Tractatus 8 de furtis.
- (*p*) Du Cange vox Ejectus & vox Wreckum.

their

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- their properties and that the nearest relations of those who died in a wreck should inherit them (*q*). The efforts of religious princes were useful in restraining this practice in England; though it is to be lamented there are still a few instances of it on the coasts of Devonshire, Cornwall and Ireland. The clergy and princes of former times zealously opposed this usage; nor can there be a doubt but our pious king George III. would, if acquainted with the execrable custom, use his influence to abolish what little remains of it in every part of his dominions. Several bishops of Rome especially Gregory (*r*) VII. Alexander (*s*) III. and Honorius (*t*) IV. exerted themselves in abrogating this custom among the princes of the West. A synod held during the pontificate of Gregory VII. condemned the molestation of shipwrecked persons in the following manner: " Since we understand that persons are prompted by the devil to plunder those whom it is their duty humanely to assist and comfort; we anathematize any person who does not give up the person and goods of the shipwrecked in safety" (*u*). The council of Nantz condemned the custom of enriching the treasury with what was seized in consequence of a shipwreck, excommunicated those who enslaved the persons or possessed themselves of the properties of the shipwrecked and prevailed on Guido a French nobleman to renounce what he gained in this way.
1127. Pope Honorius II. confirmed the decree of

(*q*) Wilkins p. 342.(*r*) Concil: Roman: A. D. 1078.(*s*) Concil: Lateranum cap: xxiv.(*t*) Raynald: A. D. 1285, n. 40.(*u*) Baron: vol: xi p. 503.

council, admonished the bishops to take that the goods which any one flung into sea from fear of a wreck be preserved the owner, and condemned as unjust and robbers men who seized on things which divine clemency had spared (*w*). The pope of Guido, backed by the influence prayers of the archbishop of Rheims, induced Philip Augustus king of France and princes and nobles to relinquish this vice; and this pious arch-bishop pronounced anathemas against such as should attempt restore it (*x*). About the middle of the century bishop Gothofred excommunicated count Raymond on account of his levy to distressed mariners; and Cassimir of Poland renounced the practice in order to this purpose. I a Catholic prince state the usage as cruel and unjust, contrary to the law of God and to a decree of Pope; and promise that neither we ourselves nor our officers will demand the goods of the shipwrecked, but that they be preserved safe and undiminished for the proprietors for their nearest relations. But if they have no lawful heir or successor we then give those goods for ourselves (*y*). The story might shew that the Gospel also discouraged unnatural crimes, ordeals &c. &c.; he hastens to enquire into its general influence on the manners, customs or laws of a nation which embraced it. The particular effects of it which we have exhibited satisfy such an enquiry; but a more accurate discussion will doubtless be acceptable to many readers.

) Hildeberti Epist. lxxvii ad Honorium, & Thomassin.  
Du Cange Supplement vox Lagan.

(y) Ib:  
Christ.



## CHAP. III.

Its effects  
on the  
Arabs.

Christianity was extensively propagated in several nations in the first and 2d centuries; but as to its effects in some of them at the early period we have no account. But we may be certain it operated powerfully even where on its first converts who were all sincere Christians, and without any thing to attach them to it but their opinion of its truth. While its professors suffered persecution or disgrace, men did not embrace it but from a sense of its divine origin; which sense could not have failed to influence their practice. Christianity being a practical institution, no person would adopt it in times of persecution unless he was determined to observe its precepts. Hence we may conclude it restrained the rapine and plunder of its professors in Arabia, and the horrid practice of burying alive female infants (*a*) in certain parts of that country, where it probably was known in the apostolic age. There were Arabs in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost when the gift of tongues was bestowed on the Apostles; numbers of Christians fled to Arabia early in the 3d century (*b*); and some Arab tribes embraced Christianity in the 4th during the reign of Valens. Hilarion sowed the seeds of Christianity among the Saracens; but they probably did not produce much fruit 'till it was received by queen Mevia who no doubt recommended the Gospel virtues, and discouraged such practices as were inconsistent with it (*c*). We possess a superabundance of information relative to the effects of Christianity in certain nations; but are in a great degree strangers to

372.

(*a*) Anc: Univ: Hist: Book iv. ch. 8.

(*b*) Ib:

(*c*) Baron: Annal: 372.

influence in others. In Arabia we are furnished with but few instances of its fruits; and so few we should probably be strangers to the actors been private persons. Naamanes Hune of the scenite Arabs or Saracens was wickedly superstitious as to kill men with own hands as sacrifices to devils; but after conversion became so reformed in his sentiments and conduct as to melt down a statue Venus for the use of the poor, and so zealous a Christian as to persuade all his relations embrace the Gospel (*d*). Having already (*e*) described the cruelty, conversion and reformation of Al Nooman king of Hira; we shall repeat it. Another king of Hira of the same name was so pious a Christian that he ascended to an heavenly crown and resigned the government to his son with the following memorable observation; *what signifies a kingdom which will certainly have an end* (*f*). So much efficacy in the prince must have operated powerfully within the sphere of his influence. We must lament that Christianity as taught in Arabia hardly deserved that honourable name; being been a compound of truth and falsehood, of Gospel doctrines and human inventions. The effects of the latter we are unacquainted with; and the fruits of the former cannot be accurately ascertained in any nation: as they always depend on the goodness of the seed, of the soil and of the sower, on the purity of the doctrine, on the temper of the disciple and on the piety and virtue of the teacher. This remark is applicable in almost every part of this chapter.

592.

*d*) Evagr: vi. 21.

*e*) P. 117.

*f*) A: Univ: Hist: Book iv. ch: 9.

## CHAP. III.

Its effects  
on the E-  
thiopians.

The teachers of the Gospel necessarily recommended and enforced the Christian virtues and reprobated the idolatrous and cruel practices which prevailed among the Ethiopians. This people worshipped Isis, Pan and Hercules, offered human sacrifices and performed other cruel acts totally inconsistent with their general character. Tho' possessed of some good qualities they tied men worn out with age by the neck to an ox's tail, and dragged them about until they expired; and deemed it meritorious to dispatch a person incurably diseased or even maimed by accident (g). We are left to conjecture in respect to the particular effects of Christianity in Ethiopia in the apostolic age, when the treasurer of Candace was baptized by St. Philip: we have certain information relative to its fruits in much later periods. Meropius the philosopher, a native of Tyre and a Christian of the 4th century, having been travelling thro' Abyssinia with Frumentius and Ædesius two of his kinsmen, died in that country. The two young men were brought before the king who admired their abilities and bestowed on them distinguished marks of his favour. Frumentius was so mild and amiable that he was called the pacific father; and both of them acquitted themselves with so much fidelity in their respective offices, that on the king's death the queen would not comply with their request of quitting the kingdom. She committed the management of all public affairs to Frumentius, and granted him permission to employ his influence in converting her subjects. Having obtained the sanction of Athanasius he baptized a vast

(g) Ancient Univ. Hist. Book iv. ch. 6, 7, 9:

number of the Abassines, built churches and made profelytes in most parts of Ethiopia. However it is probable some of the natives were not then converted, or if they were, that they relapsed to Paganism: since we are told they afterwards embraced Christianity at the desire of Aidog king of the Axumites (*b*). The following passage of the spirit of laws may enable us to judge of the effects of the Gospel in Ethiopia even in our own times. "It is the Christian religion," says Montequieu (*k*), "which in spite of the extent of empire and the influence of climate has protected Ethiopia from despotism and carried into the heart of Africa the manners and laws of Europe. The heir to the empire of Ethiopia enjoys a principality and gives to other subjects an example of love and obedience. Not far from hence may be seen the Mahometan shutting up the children of the king of Sennar at whose death the council sends to murder them in favour of the prince who ascends the throne." Hence we may judge of the political as well as moral effects of Christianity in Ethiopia! Surely it is cruel as well as impolitic to asperse such a religion were it false; and villainous to attack it when it is as true as it has been useful to mankind.

521.

We cannot tell exactly at what time Christianity was first preached in Persia and Armenia; but know it was practised in Persia in the 3d century, and think it probable the Armenians soon learned it by their intercourses with

Its effect  
on the  
Persians  
& Arme-  
nians.

(*b*) Ancient Univ. Hist. Book iv. ch. vii.

(*k*) xxiv. 3.

CHAP.  
III.

the Persians. It operated no doubt on both as it did on other nations, namely by abolishing idolatry, recommending certain virtues and restraining certain crimes which were common among Heathens. Bardesanes (*1*), an heretic of the 2d century, observed that Christianity abolished incestuous marriages in Persia and discouraged in other nations those crimes which were peculiar to each. The following extract of Constantine's epistle to Sapor the Persian king in behalf of his Christian subjects in Persia, proves the effects of Christianity on at least the former of these princes. "I honour the true God," saith the emperor (*m*), "and with the pure eye of faith behold him whose throne is in the highest heavens. Before him I prostrate myself, to him I direct my prayers abhorring all bloody sacrifices.— The creator of the universe respects not such sacrifices; he requireth only a pure mind free from all spot and stain, and values our actions by the piety and purity of our affections. He is pleased with works of charity and mercy; loving the meek and gentle, scorning the froward and perverse, loving the faithful, restraining the unfaithful, deprecating the arrogant and casting them out of their thrones, rewarding the humble and those who suffer injuries, oppression and trouble. He enriches and defends those kingdoms and empires where justice is administered, and blest both the king and the land with peace and prosperity." This lecture from a prince distinguished for valour and extent of empire had probably happy effects on the Per-

(1) Euseb: Præp: Evang: vi. 10.

(m) Euseb: vita Const: iv. 9. & seq.

San king. The following passage of Jerome CHAP.  
III. proves beyond a doubt that the Armenians and other barbarians were rendered less ferocious by the spirit of the Gospel. "The Armenian," says Jerome(n), "lays down his quiver, the Huns learn psalmody, the coldness of Scythia is warmed by the heat of the faith, the armies of the Goths carry about tents for Churches, and fight against us perhaps on more equal terms, because they and we observe the same religion." Had Jerome lived in the 10th or 11th century he would have spoken without any doubt on the subject; as he would have perceived that Christianity mitigated the violence of war among hostile nations.

Before the introduction of Christianity into Gaul, the druids managed the sacrifices, interpreted omens and directed all matters relative to their superstitions. In times of public distress they sacrificed animals; but where individuals were sick or afflicted, offered human victims to their deities. Their idols were hollow and capacious, and in them they placed victims and burned them to death. They generally sacrificed thieves, robbers or other offenders; but put the innocent to death where they were not supplied with a sufficient number of malefactors. Cæsar(o) gives this account of the Gallic druids; and observes they borrowed their superstitions from the Britons. Hence we may conclude the Britons were cruel in their worship and barbarous in their manners; and find this conclusion strengthened

Its effects  
on the  
manners  
and laws  
of Britons.

(n) Epist. lvii ad Lætam.

(o) De Bello Gal: vi, 15.

CHAP. III. by Tacitus (*p*), who observes that in Mona or Anglesea the druids sacrificed captives and persons of both sexes for the purpose of inspecting their entrails and prying into futurity. We have proved above (*q*) that human sacrifices were exploded in all nations by a code whose spirit is adverse to cruelty and bloodshed. Christianity was preached and churches were planted in Britain at a very early period; but it was perverted or destroyed by the Anglo-Saxons who invaded Britain in the middle of the 5th century (*r*). The majority of the Britons continued Pagans 'till the end of the 6th century, when pope Gregory the Great sent Austin and forty other pious monks to Britain to instruct the natives in religion and morality. Those missionaries employed themselves in fasting, prayer and charity, practised self-denial and that contempt of the world which they preached to others; and the evangelical labours of so many pious and good men must have had considerable influence on the actions of their converts. As historians seldom record the actions of individuals in private life, it is probable we should be total strangers to many happy effects of Christianity for several centuries were it not for the laws of pious princes. We may well suppose that the spirit of that system which had powerful influence on the manners of its professors had some effect on the Christian emperors and on the laws they enacted. It is impossible but a change in the spirit of lawgivers should be perceptible in their edicts. Men who pre-

(*p*) Annals: xiv, 3.

(*q*) P. 77.

(*r*) See Usher's Antiq: Brit: cap: xiv, Innet & Stillington.

scribed creeds and entered deeply into theological matters could not have omitted blending christian morality with their civil institutes, and transcribing into their political codes the justice and benevolence inspired by the Gospel. We find this supposition confirmed by facts. For, the emperors Theodosius and Justinian borrowed many parts of their codes from the Gospel; and the latter employed the first book of his code in treating on religion. These two codes and the spirit of the Gospel improved the laws of the Visigoths, Burgundians, Franks, Alemanni, Saxons, Angles, Lombards, Sicilians and other rude nations. By comparing the stile and purport of the laws of these nations with those of the two great codes now mentioned, it appears that the former were not only borrowed from the latter but are short, clear, just, merciful and breathe that equity and benevolence inspired by the Gospel. To judge of the influence of Christianity in Britain we should peruse the laws of their first Christian princes in Wilkins's (g) collection. Ethelbert who flourished in the year 580 was not only the first Christian king of the Anglo-Saxons but the first northern prince who committed laws to writing; and his wise and just laws do him honour as a lawgiver (h). Wihtred ordered impenitent adulterers to be excluded from the communion of Christians, and banished from Britain together with their property and sins, as the law expresses it, those foreigners who violated the laws of chastity (i). This law

(g) *Lexes Anglofaxonicae.*

(h) *Spelman De Legibus Anglorum—Vide Willelmi de Legibus Saxonum.*

(i) *Wilkins p. 11.*



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was intended no doubt to prevent his subjects from being corrupted by foreigners. The piety and virtues of Oswald king of Northumberland must have improved his subjects in religion and morality. He was educated early in piety and encouraged pious men from the adjacent isles particularly from Ireland to preach the Gospel to his subjects. He expressed his subjection to God by worshipping him with fervour, by an observance of his laws, by his humble demeanour and by acts of charity the most remarkable of which perhaps was the following one. As he was sitting down to dinner on Easter day, a person appointed to take care of the poor informed him a multitude of them waited without. In consequence of this intelligence, the king gave orders that the meat should immediately be carried from his own table for their use; and thinking that insufficient ordered a silver dish to be broken in pieces and divided among them (*k*). This instance of benevolence in the prince must have had considerable influence on his subjects: nor was he the only prince who set an excellent example to the Britons. Ina who was king of the West Saxons towards the close of the 7th century was a devout Christian, an able politician and a good soldier; and the moderation and peaceable disposition enjoined by our religion made him more the father than the master of his subjects. Having subdued the Britons, he treated them with a humanity 'till then unknown to the Saxon conquerors. He allowed the ancient proprietors to retain their lands, encouraged marriages and alliances between them

(*k*) Bed: Hist: Eccl: lib. iii, cap: cix.

and

and his ancient subjects, and granted them the privilege of being governed by the same laws (1). Alfred the Great transcribed into his civil institutions the ten commandments, the 21st, 22d and part of the 23d chapter of Exodus, observes that these excellent laws were delivered by God and that our Saviour came not to destroy but to fulfil the law (n). In Britain there were other pious and good princes the chief of which were Edmund king of the East Angles, Edgar, Ethelred and Canute. Edmund was a protector of widows and orphans, a support to the weak and a father to the poor; he endeavoured to establish the happiness of his people by good laws and the impartial distribution of justice, and loved his subjects so well that he endured every indignity and even death from a rude Heathen prince of Denmark who invaded Britain, rather than give them up into the hands of a tyrant (o). The canons of Edgar were excellent; having required the clergy to serve God devoutly, to assist men in their necessities, to be faithful to rulers, to exhort to repentance those who confessed and to acquaint the synod with the names of such as were averse from repentance. Those penances might have been remitted by building Churches, repairing roads, erecting bridges, relieving poor widows, orphans and strangers, manumitting their own slaves or purchasing liberty for the slaves of others, by protecting the poor and furnishing them with diet, lodging, fire and raiment. Some penances required the penitent to make restitution to those whom he injured, to forgive

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849.

850.

950.

(1) Beda, Malmfb: Lib. 1. cap: 20.—Adelhelm: p. 31.—Wilkins, p. 14.

(n) Wilkins, p. 28.

(o) Abo, Math: Paris: 855,

**CHAP.** those who offended him, to discourage men  
**III.** from sin and to restore to the right path those  
 whom he misled by his counsel or example.

For certain crimes a great man was enjoined to take off his armour and fine clothes, to go barefooted, to lie on the ground, to fast 7 years for himself or by his proxy, to feed the poor, give them money and wash their feet (e). Such penances must in many cases have produced happy effects in restraining vices and crimes; even allowing that they were often dispensed with by unworthy ecclesiastics. They restrained injustice, oppression and cruelty, excited men to build bridges, to relieve the distressed &c.; and some of them, tho' absurd as a means of expiating sin, were expensive to the sinner and operated as a tax on vicious indulgences. In the reign of Ethelred was  
 2010. held a general Council whose excellent constitutions do honour to that assembly. This Council required bishops, abbots and the clergy to be exemplary in their lives, monks to live chastly and innocently and to remember the vows which they made unto God. Let all injustice, said they, be abolished, just laws enacted, the rich and poor equally entitled to their benefit; and let peace and concord prevail in the land. Let every Christian frequently confess his sins, amend his life, prepare for receiving the Eucharist at least thrice a year, keep his oaths and compacts, avoid false weights, false measures, false testimonies, base contention, tremendous perjuries, theft, rapine, homicide, avarice, gluttony, drunkenness, fascination, adultery, fornication, sacrilege, the violation of feasts and fasts and other

(e) Wilkins, p. 24, 29, 95, 96, 97.

crimes contrary to the Gospel and to the canons of the Church. Let the people cherish and feed the poor, not injure but console widows and orphans, not vex nor molest the stranger and foreigner; and let every man do unto others that justice which he would wish for himself. Let not fines arising from sins committed against God be applied to temporal uses, but to the uses of the poor, to restoring or repairing Churches; or to buying books, bells and vestments for the clergy (*p*). It appears from the preamble to the laws of Canute, that he framed them in honour of God and for the benefit of his people. This prince exhorted men to worship one God, to love him sincerely, to celebrate feasts, fasts and sabbaths, to fear the day of judgment and the pains of hell, to confess and forsake their sins, to make restitution or atonement for their transgressions &c. &c. (*q*). From what has been said it appears that England owes many excellent laws to the Scriptures and to the clergy who employed their influence in numerous instances in restraining vice, advancing virtue and for the benefit of its inhabitants. We find religious ideas blended with and influencing some laws of the Anglosaxons; and it is reasonable to conclude that others of their laws were influenced by it, tho' we cannot clearly prove them to have been derived from that source. In England as in other nations Christianity produced its effects gently and regularly for several centuries; but operated with uncommon success in the reign of king George 3d whose piety and moral qualities

1017.

(*p*) Wilkins, p. 118, 121, 124. — Concilium Aenhamense.

(*q*) Ib: p. 131.

probably

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probably prevented exile, massacres and confiscation in Britain. The French revolution gave rise to disaffection in England: every deist, democrat and desperado panted for a republic and were encouraged by parliamentary incendiaries who extolled the spirit and prowess of the French. For a few years after the French revolution was effected the English were divided into two parties: the religious, the moral and the loyal ranged themselves on one side; and the deist, the knave and the traitor on the other. The latter who were but few comparatively exerted their talents to increase the malecontents, and did not exert them in vain: and two successive years of scarcity bordering on famine furnished them with a pretext for inveighing against the government as the cause of the calamity. Distress shook the loyalty of several; and the hopes of a French invasion added fresh spirit to the ill-disposed part of the nation. During this state of affairs an insurrection would have been inevitable were it not for the pious and worthy character of the king. For, had he disregarded the Gospel and the sacred ties of wedlock; had his favourites been scoffers of religion, libertines and gamblers, the traitor and incendiary tho' regardless of religion and virtue would have had a plausible pretext for aspersing his sovereign, and for exciting discontent among the respectable part of his subjects. But his attention to religious duties and his moral character protected himself and his people against the horrors of a revolution, baffled the traitor and furnished his successors with an example that they should follow his steps. Queen Charlotte also encourages morality among her own sex; by her example, by excluding from court

Court divorced females and by shyness and reserve to ladies only suspected of incontinence. We may naturally expect that a Christian queen should discountenance conjugal infidelity and immoral practices when a Heathen emperor (m) forbade his wife and mother even to salute an infamous woman.

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We have no certain information relative to the time of the introduction of Christianity into Wales, nor to the effects of it on its first converts in that kingdom. But it operated no doubt in Wales as it did in other nations, namely by abolishing idolatrous, cruel and immoral practices and recommending and enforcing the Christian virtues. In most cases we are strangers to its effects except where the history of princes furnishes information; nor is it probable we should have much if any information relative to its fruits in Wales were it not for the laws of one of its kings who was a religious and good man. Höel Dda, a pious king of Wales who obtained the surname of Höel the good, summoned a council consisting of arch-bishops, bishops abbots and the wisest laymen; to abolish or improve some of the ancient laws of the kingdom. He convened the council in Lent when it was reckoned unlawful to say or do any thing impure, indecent or unjust; and during the forty days of that solemn season the members of that council fasted, and prayed to God to assist them in the work of legislation and in promoting the purposes of truth and justice. During the session they mitigated the harsh

Its effects  
in Wales.

943.

(m) *Ælii Lampridii Alex: Severus* p. 122. Hist: Aug: Scriptores Edit: Paris 1620.

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laws, gave a degree of gravity and dignity to the firmly, amended some, abrogated others, retained some of the old and made some quite new, and poured out the Curse of God and of the people on those who violated this excellent code (r).

Its effects  
on the  
Scots.

Some writers (s) have maintained that the Scots received Christianity in the year 301 and others (t) in 428: to our argument it is not very material how the controversy may be decided; tho' in general we have attended to chronological arrangement in the course of this history. But it is certain that few nations stood more in need of Christianity than the Scots who were a vindictive, dishonest and debauched people. This people were extremely revengeful; nor was their hatred to be overcome but by the submission or destruction of their enemies. Their hatred was not merely that of individual against individual, but of tribe against tribe and family against family: their resentment was continued from father to son; tho' the parties were frequently strangers to the original cause of the quarrel. That Scots like other northern nations were addicted to robbery and plunder: and it was common with the wives of the conquered to murder their husbands on their return home from the wars. Christianity operated in the usual way on this people: namely by producing some virtues among its converts and abolishing certain crimes which were diametrically opposite to its letter and spirit. However its influence was counteracted for several centuries in one

(r) Labæi Concilia, vol. ix, p. 600. & Leges Walliæ & Præfationes p. Wottonum.  
(s) Lewis Hist: Brit: Book v, ch. 23. p. 139 folio.  
(t) Baron: An: 428.

material

erial point by the Scots nobles who were willing to resign a privilege granted them; that of indulging their carnal appetite almost without control. Evenus 3d, who reigned in Scotland about 12 years before 1150, was so wicked and voluptuous that he drove away from husbands and parents 100 of his wives and daughters for the gratification of his brutal appetites. He easily prevailed on the nobles who were as debauched as himself to connive at that outrage; by allowing him a power over the persons of the wives and daughters of their tenants and clients. He decreed that every man might marry as many wives as he could maintain, that on the marriage of noble virgins the king should lie with them the first night, that the nobles should do so with the plebeian virgins and that the marriages of plebeians should be common to the nobility. After the establishment of Christianity in Scotland, its teachers inveighed against the filthy laws; but inveighed in vain, they were abolished by Malcolm 3d and his pious queen Margaret, who employed all her influence with the lords to accept from the bridegroom half a mark of silver as a compensation for the odious privilege allowed by the laws. Malcolm 3d was a devout and wise prince, required piety and learning in his subjects, made sumptuary laws to restrain the extravagance of the nobles and was in his own family a pattern of modesty, justice and sobriety. He was supposed to have been prompted by the admonitions of his wife who was eminently wise and distinguished for the performance of every religious duty. She reformed ecclesiastical discipline and banished simony, concubage and incestuous marriages from her kingdom.



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dom. She did not allow the tender minds of her children to be elated by the dignity of their birth; but guarded them against the gaudy trifles, tempting pleasures and seducing vanities and extravagancies of courts. For wealth and power she considered herself accountable to God, who would expect those talents to be employed to his honour and for the benefit of his creatures. On her appearance abroad she was surrounded by widows, orphans or other unhappy objects; and when she came home usually found her hall full of poor people who never departed without comfort or relief. She frequently visited the hospitals and attended the sick; always remembering that she assisted her Saviour in the persons of the afflicted. Her husband Malcolm who had been a rough prince was softened by her gentleness; and the whole kingdom felt the happy effects of her influence over him. If magistrates or public officers dared to abuse the king's authority or shelter their injustice under the sanction of his name, the sufferers were relieved and the oppressors were punished (a). Surely the piety and morality of this queen must have affected her subjects and improved them considerably in virtue and happiness!

Its effects  
on the  
Irish.

The work of a learned antiquary (b) assists us in pointing out many happy effects of Christianity among the ancient Irish. Before their acquaintance with the Gospel they were like the other barbarians of Europe sunk in

(a) Buchanan Hist: lib: iv. vii. — *Lessens de moribus* Scot: lib: i. p. 59 & lib: ii. — Boeth: lib. ii. p. 59. — *Horodae* p. 452. Erompton's Cron: A. D. 1093.

(b) Ledwich's Antiq:

ignorance and rudeness and indulged all the ferocity of brutal nature. The Attacotti a people of Britain having eaten human flesh in the end of the 4th century (c); it cannot appear strange that the Irish did so in the beginning of the 1st (d). The ritual of the Irish Celtes was unstained with blood until the Scythic swarm subdued them at an early period, introduced human sacrifices and forced them to embrace the religious sentiments and practices of the conquerors. What more signal favour then could have been conferred on such a people, than a communication of the mild and gentle precepts of the Gospel? or what more likely to eradicate their barbarous customs than that religion which taught mercy, peace and love? This mercy was conferred on them at an early period through the unadulterated channel of Greek missionaries or their disciples; and the happy effects of it were numerous. After the conversion of the Irish, their druidic groves and trilithons were destroyed or employed as temples of the true God; their barbarous manners were softened, and an enthusiastic zeal for superior purity which often terminated in monachism filled Ireland with structures destined for the service of religion and letters (e). If we consider the learning, the pure religion and the piety of the regular and secular clergy of Ireland for several centuries, we must conclude that Christianity produced happier fruits in this than in other kingdoms. The Irish possessed learning when it was almost extinct elsewhere, pure Christianity when other nations were su-

(c) Hieron: *Adversus Jovin*: lib: ii. p. 201 Edit: Paris 1706.

(d) Strabo lib: iv. p. 201. Edit: Paris.

(e) *Antiq. Passim*.

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perstitious, and such piety as was uncommon in other parts of Christendom. Christianity was imported into Ireland not from Rome but from France and Britain; not through Romish but through Greek missionaries. The Irish were instructed by the Britons in divine and human literature; but soon equalled their instructors in both these respects. The British clergy terrified by Dioclesian's persecution (*f*) imported Christianity as well as literature into Ireland; the invasion of Britain by the Anglo-Saxons in the 5th century (*g*) drove hither many learned and pious men; and the popes prohibition of schools in England in the 6th caused men desirous of knowledge to migrate to Ireland where the papal injunctions had no force. In the 6th century the learned and pious Columba (*b*) the founder of the monastic order called Culdees, established such admirable rules for his monks that they soon became as distinguished for learning as for sanctity of life. We have various proofs of the literature of the Irish from the 6th to the 11th century. From Dupin (*k*) who furnishes the substance of the works of Columbanus an Irish writer of the 7th century it appears, that some of them are pious and moral, and others written with judgment and learning: and the work of Cumman (*l*) another Hibernian of the same century is learned and argumentative. The testimony of Bede is decisive not only as to the learning of the Irish in and before his own time, but to the purity of their manners.

(*f*) Usseri Antiq: Brit: cap: xvi.(*g*) Ledw: Antiq: Essay vii.(*b*) Ib: Essay iii.(*k*) Cent: vii.(*l*) Usseri Sylloge Epist: p. 24 Edit: Dublin.

erofity towards strangers. "It was  
'faith he(m), "that many noble Eng-  
and others of inferior rank withdrew  
eland to cultivate letters or to lead  
of greater sanctity. Some became  
s, others attended the lectures of ce-  
ted teachers: these the Irish most  
fully received and supplied without  
ecompece with food, books and in-  
ion." Alcuinus (n) the preceptor of  
agne thus wrote of Willibrord a 300.  
mbrian, afterwards arch-bishop of  
: and an eminent missionary among  
fians in the 8th century. "When  
rived at the age of 20 he was in-  
d with a desire of a stricter life and  
e of visiting foreign countries. And  
ise he heard that learning flourished  
ly in Ireland he went thither and  
twelve years there treasuring up  
ledge and virtue, to enable him to  
ne the teacher of many nations."  
s (o) a Briton spent twenty years in  
cultivating teachers of excellent eru-  
*præceptores eximie doctos*, studying sa-  
d prophane authors and transferred to  
ill treasures of Irish literature; *Higazas in Corinnian seu Cornubian trans-*  
The uncommon erudition and piety  
ral Irishmen recommended them to  
Charlemagne, Charles the Bald, Al-  
: Great and other princes. Virgil an  
shop of the 8th century was acquaint-  
h the earth's sphericity and the doc-  
f the Antipodes: a doctrine which

t: Eccl. iii. 27 & Usseri Sylloge Præfatio.

rr: ib: & Surius Tom: vi. p. 128.

eri Antiq: Britain: cap. xiv. p. 292 London Edit: 1687:

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was then condemned in other nations as false and heretical. This bishop having been on his journey to the Holy Land was detained for two years by Pepin; to profit by his uncommon erudition and piety (*p*). The emperor Charlemagne brought from all parts but especially from Ireland men of the greatest reputation to propagate literature in his dominions. Dungal (*q*) an Hibernian, who taught philosophy and astronomy in Italy with considerable credit, was a favourite of Charlemagne and consulted by him on a solar eclipse. While literature flourished in Ireland beyond every other kingdom; *florantibus his diebus in Hibernia studiis liberalibus præ cæteris regnis* (*r*); there landed in France two Irishmen Clemens and Albinus who were incomparably skilled in profane and sacred literature, *in secularibus & sacris scripturis incomparabiliter eruditi*. The emperor rejoiced (*s*) at their arrival and directed the former to stay in France for the instruction of youth, and sent the other to Italy for the same purpose. Eric of Auxerre (*t*) in his address to Charles the Bald thus expressed himself: Why should I mention Ireland which defying the dangers by sea sends to us numbers of philosophers who voluntarily banish themselves to be in the service of our wise Solomon? Camden (*w*) assures us the Saxons of the 8th century flocked to Ireland as the great mart of literature; and three famous scholars Macbeth, Duffslan and Magilnum

(*p*) Uffer's Sylloge, p. 137.(*q*) Muratori Antiq: Italiæ Tom: iii. Dissert: xliii.(*r*) Ufferi Sylloge p. 6. Præf:(*s*) Uffers Præf: to Sylloge.(*t*) Camdens Brit: p. 730. Uffers Edit:(*w*) lb:

went from Ireland to Alfred the Great to propagate letters in his kingdom: the third was exuberant in the arts, skilled in literature *artibus frondens, litera doctus* (x). Osbern (y) a Cantabrigian monk of the 9th century and a beautiful Latin writer observes, "learning seems to have been natural to the Irish from long habit; there were many illustrious men among them admirably instructed in sacred and profane literature." Notwithstanding the destruction of books in Ireland by northern invaders in the end of that century, the following lines written on Sulgenus (z) bishop of St. David's who visited Ireland about the year 1076 prove that literature had revived here and that the Irish were then celebrated for wisdom and knowledge:

*Exemplo patrum commotus amore legendi  
Ivit ad Hibernos sopia mirabile claros.*

To prove the literature of the Irish in the 8th and 9th centuries we quote a learned writer who must be unprejudiced on this subject. "The Hibernians," says Mosheim (a), "were lovers of learning and distinguished themselves in those times of ignorance by the culture of the sciences beyond all other European nations, travelling thro' the most distant lands to improve and communicate their knowledge, and discharging with the highest reputation and applause the function

(x) Usseri Antiq. Brit: cap: xvi.

(y) In vita S. Dunstani, Wharton's Anglia Sacra, pars 2 p. 91, 92.

(z) Præf: to Usseri Sylloge.

(a) Cent: viii, ix.

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 “ both during this and the following century.  
 “ But that the Hibernians were the first  
 “ teachers of scholastic theology in Europe  
 “ and so early as the 8th century illustrated  
 “ the doctrines of religion by the principles  
 “ of philosophy, I learned but lately from the  
 “ testimony of Benedict abbot of Anienne in  
 “ the province of Languedoc who lived in this  
 “ period, and some of whose productions are  
 “ published by Baluzius in the 5th tome of  
 “ his miscellanies.—The philosophy and logic  
 “ taught in the European schools in the  
 “ 9th century scarcely deserved such honour-  
 “ ble titles, and were little better than an  
 “ empty jargon. There were however to be  
 “ found in various places, particularly among  
 “ the Irish, men of acute parts and extensive  
 “ knowledge who were perfectly well entitled  
 “ to the appellation of philosophers: the  
 “ chief of which was Johannes Scotus Eri-  
 “ gena the friend and companion of Charles  
 “ the Bald.—There were, says the same  
 “ author, many other excellent scholars in Ire-  
 “ land, particularly Sedulius who commented  
 “ on St. Paul’s epistles: these were the depo-  
 “ sitaries of primitive Christianity and evan-  
 “ gelical truth which in the rest of Europe  
 “ was horribly corrupted and almost extin-  
 “ guished by superstition and Heathen practi-  
 “ ces.” That Christianity was pure in Ireland  
 “ while it was adulterated elsewhere appears from  
 “ the same respectable testimony. “ The Irish  
 “ who in the 8th century were known by  
 “ the name of Scots were the only divines who  
 “ refused to dishonour their reason by submit-  
 “ ting it implicitly to the dictates of autho-  
 “ rity: naturally subtle and sagacious they ap-  
 “ plied

plied their philosophy to the illustration of the truths and doctrines of religion : a method which was almost generally abhorred and exploded in all other nations." To prove the piety of several Irishmen in the 8th century the following testimony of Alcuinus would alone be sufficient. In this century Willibrord visited Ireland, moved thereto principally by the fame of its holy men, particularly of the blessed father Egbert and the venerable priest Wigbert who both for a love of a celestial country had forsaken their houses and kindred and retired to Ireland. The blessed Willibrord emulating the sanctity of these two holy men, embarked for this island where he joined himself to their society like a diligent bee that he might by means of their vicinity suck the mellifluous flowers of piety, and build up in the hive of his own breast sweet honey-combs of virtue." Surely so much learning, purity of religion and piety as distinguished the Irish teachers of Christianity for a few centuries must have operated in an extraordinary manner on the manners of the people. It appears from Bede (b) that, in the end of the 5th century, the Irish were an innocent people and always most friendly to the English nation ; and William of Malmshury (c) observes that in the 7th they were an innocent race of genuine simplicity and no contrivers of evil. In the 6th and 7th centuries the Culdees were remarkable for continence, practiced such works of piety and charity as were suggested by the prophetic,

(b) Hist: iv. 26.

(c) Lib: 1, cap: 3, de Gestis Reg: Anglo.





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evangelical and apostolical writings, and held in that veneration which never fail accompany superior learning, solid piety, exemplary charity and disinterested benevolence. They did not confine their pious and laborious to Ireland; but established monasteries in the Scottish isles, in Wales and Britain where they exercised piety and virtue, enlightened every part with the brilliancy of the Gospel and of learning. Columba (*d*) went from Ireland to Britain the conversion of the Picts; the northern English were converted by his followers. Culdean monks whose exertions Dr. Innocent records in honourable terms. Oswald prince of Northumberland employed Aidan Irishman and a Culdee to instruct his subjects in evangelical truth: he was well qualified for the purpose; having been according to Bede (*g*) modest, moderate, pious and zealous towards God. The learned Columbanus left his native country for the instruction of nations in religion and morality. He reprov'd even popes (*b*) and princes, and have done much good by his piety and living, by his primitive simplicity and austerity. He also reprov'd Theodoric king of the Burgundians for keeping concubines and when tempted by large promises Sigibert king of the Franks for staying his kingdom, replied, it becomes not the gape for other men's riches who for

(*d*) Bede iii. 4: v. 20.(*e*) Origenes Anglicanæ ch. iv. 7.(*f*) Hector Boeth. Hist. Scot. lib. ix.(*g*) iii. 3.(*b*) Dupin's Eccles. Hist. cent. vii.(*a*) Baron. 610.

their own for Christ's sake (1). Columbanus founded a monastery in Burgundy and another in Bobio in Italy; and not only Columbanus but other Irishmen applied the hard-earned rewards of instruction to building hospitals (u) in various parts of the continent, and endowing them for the reception of missionaries who should go from Ireland to propagate the faith and to reform foreigners in religion and virtue. In those hospitals some of the founders rested when almost worn out with evangelical labours; there charity held out her liberal hand to the weary traveller; and there a young generation of ecclesiastics was trained up to extend the faith among obdurate infidels. Surely then old Ireland might well have been called the school of very pious and very learned men, *sanctissimorum, doctissimorumque officina* (x), whose piety and learning must have been productive of happy effects. For several centuries the Irish were so famed for piety and learning that their canons were adopted in different parts of Europe: in England by Eggbriht arch-bishop of York; in Germany by Burchard bishop of Worms; and by Ivo bishop of Chartres in the 11th century (m). The Irish canons operated no doubt powerfully on both princes and subjects of Ireland. These canons placed the duty of a king in just judgment; in defending strangers, widows, pupils and the poor; in restraining theft, punishing adultery, not exalting the

750.  
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(1) Camden's Brit: p. 730:

(u) Du Cange vox Hospitalia.

(x) Preface to Usher's Sylloge:

(m) D'Achery Spicilegia vol: i: lib: xxiv. xxvii. xxviii: xxxvi & Opuscula S: Patrisio adscripta & a Waræo edita—Ledw: Antiq: p: 422.

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unjust, exterminating parricides and perjure in appointing just, wise and sober ministers in defending his country bravely and justly against his enemies, in discouraging magic, augury and other superstitions &c. These canons also tended to advance religion and virtue among Irish subjects; having required the man who spoke irreverently of a good prince through hatred or envy to live for seven days on bread and water; enjoined a year's penance on murderers, fornicators or consulters of auspices; required a thief to do penance for half a year, to live on bread and water for twenty days and if possible to make restitution. These penances, though inadequate to the offences, must have been aids to the civil magistrate and considerable restraints on the commission of crimes.

Its effects  
on the  
Goths.

The ancient Getæ or Goths were an idolatrous and cruel people. They imagined the souls of the deceased migrated to Zémolxis, and used to send in a ship a certain chosen messenger to convey their wants to this God with instructions for the purpose. He was chosen in the following manner: A number of men held three javelins erect; while others tossed a man on high that he might fall on them. If he died immediately on the fall he was supposed to be an acceptable messenger; if he survived he was rejected, and another tossed up as before till the vile experiment succeeded (a) Ovid (b) observed of the Goths that there was no nation more terrible than they:

(a) Alberti Krantz: Hist: Sueciz, Goth: Ostrog: & Wisl: lib: i cap: 32.

(b) Lib: ii Epist: ex Ponto ad Atticum.

*Nulla Getis toto gens est truculentior orbe.*

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The Vandals, a nation of the Goths and differing from them only in name, were so cruel that in the litanies of the Christians were the following words, *a Vandalis libera nos Domine*, from the Vandals O Lord deliver us (c). The spirit of Christianity might naturally be supposed to have had considerable influence on the minds and hearts of this people; and this supposition is confirmed by Prudentius, Orosius and other writers of the 5th and 6th centuries.

*Laxavit Scythicas verbo penetrante pruinas (d)  
Vox evangelica; Hircanas quoq; fervida brumas  
Solvit, ut exutus glacie jam mollior amnis  
Caucasea de cote fluit Rhodopeius Hebrus  
Mansuere Getæ feritasq; cruenta Geloni  
Lacte mero; sitiens exsanguia pocula miscet  
Libatura sacros Christi de sanguine potus.*

That evangelic voice with piercing sound  
Relax'd the Scythian frost, Hircania's cold  
Thaw'd at religion's glow as Hebrus roll'd  
From Caucasian rocks, his fetters thaws  
At bland approach of spring; the Getæ too  
Grew mild.

The fierceness of the wild Geloni  
A Saviour's blood imbibes, all healing draught!  
And sinks subdued in new-born gentleness (e).

The Goths and Vandals it is true committed devastation in the Roman empire after they

(c) Rerum Polon: Scriptores tom: ii p: 12.

(d) Prudent: in Apotheosi v: 494 cum notis Delphini.

(e) Translation of Wm. Preston barrister,

became



*Nam Simul terris animisq; duri  
Et Sua Bessi nive duriores  
Nunc oves facti duce te gregantur  
Pacis in aulam.*

*Quasque cervices dare servituti  
Semper a bello indomiti negarunt  
Nunc jugo veri domini subactas  
Sternere gaudent.*

*O vices rerum! bene versa forma!  
Invii montes prius et cruenti  
Nunc tegunt versos monachis latrones  
Pacis alumnos.*

*Mos ubi quondam fuerat ferarum  
Nunc ibi ritus viget angelorum  
Et latet justus quibus ipse latro  
Vixit in antris.*

From land to land with one accord  
Shall sounds of gratulation flow  
When Christ shall to his healing word  
The stubborn nations bow.

Where fleet and snows eternal beat  
And Boreas reigns with fierce control  
With sacred glow religion's heat  
Now thaws the winter of the soul,

The Bessi rude and savage kind  
Hard as their native snows and cold  
Are drawn like lambs with gentle mind  
To the Almighty shepherd's fold.

The tribes that rear'd the haughty crest  
'Gainst rule and laws in bloody fight  
Invite with hallow'd love possess  
Their Saviour's yoke and burden light.

O hap

e of Rome from the Goths have been  
erated; and an author (m) who uni-  
y labours to asperse Christianity and its  
tors reluctantly acknowledges that "the  
re learned and judicious contemporaries  
re forced to confess, that infant Rome  
l formerly received more essential in-  
y from the Gauls than she now sustain-  
from the Goths in her declining age."

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e Bessi a people of Thrace were distin-  
d for theft, robbery and other crimes.  
: Ovid (n) was in exile he lamented in  
ifferent passages his neighbourhood with  
ind other barbarians.

Its effects  
on the  
Bessi.

*ere quam miserum est inter Bessosq. Getasq.  
romatæ cingunt fera gens, Bessique Getæque.*

appy change wrought on this people in  
h century by Nicetas a bishop of the  
s thus partly expressed in the following  
f his contemporary Paulinus (o).

*uibus jam tunc resonabit illa  
diis tellus, ubi tu rigentes  
ces Christo fera colla miti  
Subdere Gentes.*

*q: Riphæis Boreas in oris  
zat densis fluvios pruinis  
gelu mentes rigidas Superno  
Igne resolvitis.*

Bibbion.

ristia iii. Eleg: 10 & iv. Eleg: i.

blioth: Patrum vol. vi. p. 294.

*Nam*

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III.

female who having cured the king's son was supposed to possess miraculous powers. In consequence of their conversion each of them no doubt reprobated idolatrous and cruel practices and exercised some virtues little known to the Pagans. Spanish history does not furnish stronger instances of piety and virtue than in Fernandus and his son Alphonfus who reigned in the 10th century. A little before his death the former publicly put on his diadem and royal robes and thus addressed the Lord with a loud voice. "O Lord, the power is thine, the kingdom is thine, thou art king over all kings, every thing is subject to thy command, the kingdom which I received at thine hands I restore, I commit my soul to thy care" (a). Having uttered these pious words he stripped off his royal robes, prayed for pardon of his sins, did penance and expired. Men no doubt are often religious and virtuous without affectation of sanctity; but sincere piety cannot fail of producing its natural fruits in moral virtue. The following encomium on Alphonfus prince of Asturia proves he inherited his father's virtues. In his days justice flourished, servitude received a deadly blow, tears consolation, the faith encrease, his territories enlargement, his right hand was the safeguard of his country, defence without fear, his soul was too great to be confined to the narrow limits of Asturia (b). The exemplary conduct of such a prince must have improved his subjects in morals and happiness! Where a king is pious and worthy, we may conclude there are thou-

(a) Federici Tolet: de rebus Hisp: p. 234.

(b) Ib: p. 239.

as in his kingdom equally religious and  
 ral who are not named in the annals of  
 ory.

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Christianity was highly beneficial to the  
 ins, Geloni and other barbarous nations  
 o received it. The Huns worshipped  
 ir swords as gods and exceeded all other  
 barians in cruelty even towards their own  
 ldren. They flayed or mangled the faces  
 their male infants on the day they were  
 n; to accustom them to bear pain and  
 unds even from their birth, or to strike  
 ror into their enemies by their frightful  
 ect. They roamed about without any  
 d abode, subsisted on herbs and half-  
 den flesh, were destitute of truth and al-  
 st strangers to the difference of right and  
 ing (a). Jerome (b) observes of the Huns  
 t their neighbours dreaded them more than  
 hipwreck in a storm, and that they were  
 anxious for their own safety than for the  
 sity of their virgins. Their conversion  
 s begun by Theotimus (c) a Christian  
 losopher whose pious instructions and ex-  
 plary conduct must have softened and im-  
 ved the morals at least of his proselytes.  
 was their king embraced Christianity at  
 nstantinople in the presence of Justinian,  
 d on his return home demolished their  
 ples and idols; which so provoked his  
 gan subjects that they murdered him and  
 sed his brother to the throne (d). It is

Its effects  
 on the  
 Huns,  
 Geloni,  
 Heruli,  
 Abasgi  
 &c.

402.

530.

- a) Amm: Marcell: xxxi, 2—Jornand: de rebus Geticis caps  
 -Beatus Rhen: lib: ii p: 111.  
 b) Baron: Annal: 395.  
 c) Ibid An: 402.  
 d) Theoph: Chronog: p: 150.

probable



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III.

794.

probable the bulk of them continued in an unconverted and barbarous state 'till they were subdued by Charlemagne whose authority and religion soon brought them from savage cruelty to softness and civilization. The Geloni were so barbarous that they clothed themselves in skins; and the Heruli fancied they appeased their gods by human victims, were addicted to lust and rapine, put to death the aged and infirm and required wives to kill themselves at the tombs of their husbands (e). The following line of Prudentius expresses the wretched state of some barbarous nations and their improvement by the Gospel:

*Manfuevere Getæ, feritasque cruenta Geloni  
Lacte mero.*

Christianity was likewise useful to the Abasgi an idolatrous people of Scythia who were barbarously treated by their princes before their conversion. These tyrants used to force from parents their most beautiful boys, made them eunuchs, sold them to the Romans and killed the parents themselves; lest they should revenge the injuries offered to their children. The emperor Justinian prohibited this custom and appointed men to instruct them in Christianity and to wean them from the idolatrous and cruel practices which were common among them (f). Since the conversion of idolatrous and fierce nations they necessarily reprobated cruel practices, have been softened in their manners and enjoyed

(e) Procop: de Bello Goth: ii, 14. Evag: iv: 9.

(f) Procop: ib: iv, 3 p: 571 Edit: Paris 1662 & Evag: iv, 21

Several

several benefits to which they had been strangers and which are still unknown to unconverted nations.

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III.

Some ancient German nations practised idolatrous and cruel rites; worshipped Hercules and Mars and immolated human victims to Teutanes or Mercury (c). They were so uncultivated that they subsisted mostly on milk and on the flesh of wild beasts, lived in filthy huts with their cattle and clothed themselves with skins; until Crotholdus, Sidonius, Winnifred and other pious and good men (d) instructed them in religion, in morality, in letters and in several comforts and conveniencies to which they had been strangers. Crotholdus bishop of Worms made many converts by his diligent and faithful exposition of the divine word; and Sidonius who preached at Mentz is thus extolled for his piety, virtues and care of his flock.

Its effects  
on some  
German  
nations.

507

545

*Te vigili custode lupus non diripit agnos,  
Te pascente Gregem non ovis ulla perit  
Te doctrina probum, providentia sacra modestum  
Fecit et eloquio vincere mella tuo.*

Winnifred or Boniface a Briton may be called the apostle of the Germans; having been more successful than any of his predecessors in expanding their minds, softening their manners and in leading them from cruelty to mercy and loving kindness. He converted the Hessians and Turingi; but unfortunately blended the genuine precepts of Christianity with certain

(c) Tacit: de moribus cap: ix. Laët: i, 21, & Mascou's Hist Germany.

(d) Vide Pantaleon de viris illustribus Germaniæ.

doctrines

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doctrines and practices unauthorized by Scriptures (*e*). But after his long and successful exertions among other nations he lengthily murdered by the Frisians whom he was labouring to convert. Willhardus or Willbrod a Briton and Luitgerus had more success with these barbarians; and to the example of such men the Frisians owed the promulgation of a code of laws (*f*) which was framed for them soon after their conversion. In succeeding ages other religious personages exerted influence to render the Germans virtuous and happy; the chief of which was queen Matilda (*g*) who reigned in Germany in the 10th century. She employed a great part of her fortune in acts of mercy, and was incessantly engaged during her husband's absence in wars in visiting and feeding the poor, in visiting the sick and prisoners and in relieving the necessitous of every description. So much piety and worth in a queen must have been highly edifying to her subjects and improved their condition in virtue and happiness!

Its effects  
on the  
Gauls,  
Franks and  
Burgundians.

A learned writer (*h*) has proved that the ancient nations sacrificed human victims to their gods before the promulgation of the Gospel. The Gallic druids did so in Celtic times: which hideous practice was reprobated by every man who professed the religion of Christ. Christianity was received in Gaul and produced fruits there at an early period: Barbesanes (*k*) a heretic of the 2d century

(*e*) Hechtij Germi Sacra lib: 1, p: 73,

(*f*) Lindenbrog.

(*g*) Baron Annal: 972.

(*h*) Geusius de victimis humanis.

(*k*) Euseb: Præp: Evang: vi. 10.

observed, that Christians did not violate the marriage bed in Bactria and Gaul as was customary in Pagan nations. However it is probable the majority of the people were not converted nor reformed to a much later period. Before the conversion of the Franks a Heathen (l) writer represented them as treacherous and deceitful, totally regardless of their words and accustomed to break faith with a laugh or smile on their countenances: and they retained nearly the same character in the 5th century when Salvianus (m) thus expressed himself: The Saxons are ferocious, the Franks faithless, the Gepidæ inhuman, the Chuni lascivious; in short all the barbarians are shockingly vicious. But Agathias (n) who wrote after their conversion compliments them for their fidelity and justice. Clovis the 1st king of the Franks, having been but little acquainted with Christianity, could not be supposed much influenced by its spirit or precepts. But his son Theodoric abrogated the idolatrous rites of the Franks, Alemanni and Bavarians and made considerable improvements in the laws of these nations. But as these laws did not extirpate Pagan vices; they were reviewed and improved successively by Hildebert, Lotharius and Dagobert, the last of which assisted by his nobles and bishops expunged every thing inconsistent with Christianity, or altered them so as to answer every purpose and to suit his subjects in those three nations (p). A writer (q) of the 5th century speaks of the

567.

510.

632.

(l) Vopiscus in proculi vita Hist: Augustæ Scriptores, p. 247.

(m) De Gubernatione Dei lib: iv. & Procop: ii, 25.

(n) Lib: i, p. 13. Edit. Paris 1660.

(p) Aleman: rerum Scriptores, tom: 2.

(q) Orosius, vii: 32.

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370-

427.

610.

destructive progress of the Pagan Burgundians who settled in Gaul; but says Christianity softened that ferocious people and induced them to treat the Gauls not as a conquered people but as brethren. However the observation applied only to those Burgundians who embraced Christianity in that century, not to those who retained their ancient opinions and practices to the 6th and 7th centuries. In the latter end of the 6th Columbanus and other pious Irishmen visited France for the conversion of the Burgundians, Franks and other inhabitants of Gaul from false to true religion, from ferocity to mildness and from vice to virtue. Some of the Burgundians not only shut their ears against the pious instructions of Columbanus but whipped and banished him, crying out, these are our ancient gods, the guardians of this place who hitherto furnished us with succour and relief (r). The learning and exemplary conduct of those pious monks must have produced salutary effects on the morals of all with whom they were concerned. Their discourses were instructive and persuasive; having been illustrated by their profound humility, patience and indefatigable charity. Theodoric king of Burgundy was delighted with the life and conversation of Columban, often visited him, and solicited his prayers with respect and affection. Yet such civilities could not restrain him from pointing out the king's faults especially that of keeping concubines; and he prevailed with him so far at last that he promised to reform in that particular (s). He also reproved Brunchild

(r) *Alemani rerum. Scriptores tom: i, p. 236, 237.*(s) *Ibi: Mabill: 2d Benedict: age. Cave's Eccl: Library, p. 302, 303.*

king's grandmother for various vices. CHAP. III.  
 ce and other nations owed much to de-  
 personages who recommended the pre-  
 of the Gospel by their pious examples.  
 en Rodigunda protected widows and or- 527.  
 s, diligently searched out persons who  
 reduced in their fortunes and too bashful  
 eg, considered herself as attending her  
 our in the persons of the poor, and was  
 tive to establish piety and morality a-  
 g her subjects. She took particular care  
 ep her heart from being corrupted by the  
 grandeur of the world, and was a de-  
 d enemy to the vanities and extravagan-  
 of courts. Virtues like hers while they  
 oted the happiness must have had some  
 t on the actions of her subjects (a). But  
 ll the royal professors of Christianity none  
 been more zealous in recommending re-  
 on and virtue than the emperors Charle-  
 me and Lewis the Pious. The former  
 ned in the end of the 8th and begin-  
 g of the 9th centuries; and the latter who  
 his son succeeded to the power and pie-  
 of his father. Charlemagne notwithstanding  
 intolerance and other faults possessed many  
 owments, learning, valour and several vir-  
 s. He understood Greek thoroughly,  
 re Latin fluently, studied astronomy and  
 liberal arts, and encouraged eminent mas-  
 to settle in his dominions for his own  
 ication and for the improvement of his  
 ects. His person was graceful, his body  
 uft and his courage heroical; he provid-  
 liberally for pastors, attended divine ser-

Greg: Turon: lib: iii cap: 4, lib: vi cap: 34 & Baronius 527.

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vice twice a day and was distinguished for justice, clemency and other virtues. The Capitula or ecclesiastical and civil laws of these emperors are full of piety and zeal for religion, and enjoin both with all the weight of their authority. Charlemagne recommended the capitula to his subjects from a spirit of charity, as he informs us, and in imitation of king Josias who made a circuit thro' his kingdom correcting, admonishing and recalling his people to the worship of the true God (*d*). Above fifty of the laws of Charlemagne and Lewis were transcribed from the Mosaic code, some of them from the words of the Gospel, many of them from its spirit and still more of them from the canons of councils. From the Mosaic code those princes borrowed their laws relative to taking the name of God in vain, honouring parents, stealing and selling men, killing servants, striking pregnant women, burning fields or stacks of corn and seducing or defiling virgins. To the same source we are to ascribe the laws relative to false witness, to sorcery, magic, murder, adultery, bestiality, disturbing a bird nursing it's young, excusing men just married from war or other business, with many other just and humane laws (*e*) borrowed from the Mosaic writings which now make a part of the Christian system. The capitula (*m*) contain excellent instructions for princes, for the clergy and laity; furnishing princes with pious and moral lessons too numerous to be inserted in

(*d*) Lindenbrog: *Præfatio Caroli Magni*.

(*e*) Lindenbrog: *Capitula Regum Francorum* lib: vi p: 98.

(*m*) *Ib*: lib: i cap: 82, 160.

**A** Work of this kind. In one of the capitula princes are required to educate their children in the fear of God, to refrain from those vices they wish to suppress in others, and to afford examples of piety, peace, charity and concord on the exercise of which depends the happiness of a kingdom and a people (*n*). Those emperors commanded ecclesiastics to let their light so shine before men that they may see their good works and glorify their father which is in heaven. The capitula require the clergy to exhort their flocks to love God and their neighbour, to have faith and hope in God, to practise humility, patience, chastity, mercy and loving kindness, to confess their sins, to forgive men their trespasses and to avoid those vices which the Scriptures condemn, namely fornication, uncleanness, luxury, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, envyings &c. &c. The laws of those emperors recommend peace and concord as a mark of the true faith, as acceptable to God and agreeable to the Scriptures; and recite several passages of them to induce men to live piously, justly and benevolently. One of those laws makes true charity to consist in loving God more than ourselves, our neighbour as ourselves and in doing nothing to others which we would not wish to be done to ourselves. Another of them represents the folly of destroying the soul for any thing in this world, for what profiteth a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul? One of them forbids us to fear him who can destroy the

(*n*) *Londovici Capit: Addit: 2da.*



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body, but him who can destroy both soul and body in hell: and another, with the psalmist, condemns him who consents to or connives at an offence as a partaker of the guilt. The capitula of those emperors not only quote the Scriptures, but the canons of several councils for the discouragement of vice and the advancement of virtue; and threaten to excommunicate the clergy or laity who refused to obey the bishops as the canons required. The bishops no doubt drew up this code and prevailed on the emperors to give it their sanction; nor could laws supported by the authority of Scripture, of emperors and of the clergy have failed to produce many happy effects. The emperor Charlemagne paid extraordinary attention to the poor not only in his own dominions, but sent money for the relief of the indigent to the cities of Syria and Egypt; and solicited the alliance of foreign princes that he might more easily prevail on them to succour the necessitous in their respective dominions (f). Some time before his death he publicly exhorted his son Lewis to give alms in the name of the Lord, to assist men destitute of human aid, to love and fear God, to observe his precepts, to honour the clergy as fathers, to love his subjects as children and to keep himself blameless. Having delivered this exhortation he resigned his crown and devoted the remainder of his days to prayers, almsgiving and other religious exercises (g). Such exhortations from such a man must have

(f) Alberti: Stadenfis Chron: p: 76 & seq.

(g) Theagenes de Gestis Ludovici Pii.

been highly edifying in his extensive dominions; and actually had an happy effect on his son Lewis who afterwards obtained the title of Lewis the Pious. Lewis was a weak and violent prince, propagated Christianity with zeal and in his general conduct acted agreeably to its letter and spirit (*b*). He sent thro' the kingdom officers called *missi* (*i*) to hear complaints, to redress grievances, to see that the poor were not neglected and that the judges did not pervert justice; and the persons usually sent were bishops or religious laymen who were not likely to receive bribes. In short he redressed such of his subjects as suffered injustice or oppression, restored their estates to such as were defrauded, emancipated those who were unjustly enslaved and in other respects acted conformably to the spirit of the Gospel. Nor was the influence of Charlemagne and Lewis confined to one kingdom, but extended to the Saxons, Bavarians and other nations which were subject to their authority. But of all the kings of France none was better calculated than Lewis 9th to improve his subjects in religion and virtue. His pious mother Blanche sowed early the seeds of piety, clemency and justice in his heart; and taught him that he was placed above his fellow-creatures with no other view than that of promoting their happiness. She laboured to give him an abhorrence of vice; and the following fact proves she had wonderful success. Lewis who was a beautiful youth of twenty having asked Joinville whether he

1236.

(b) Theag:

(i) Vide Du Cange vox *Missi* & Baluzii *Capitularia*.

would

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would choose to be afflicted with the leprosy or to commit one mortal sin; that gentleman freely declared he would rather be guilty of thirty mortal sins than have that loathsome disease. "Joinville," said the prince, "you are not sensible what it is to offend God; be assured there is no evil comparable to that you so easily prefer; for we are scarce ever sure that our penance will efface that stain of the soul." As he advanced in years he retained and strengthened those pious ideas. He devoted a great part of his time to reading the Scriptures; but thought he promoted the glory of God as much by advancing the good of his subjects as by acts of devotion. He strictly observed the laws of God, was patient and merciful to all who offended him, and studied to make peace and justice to flourish in his dominions. He visited all the provinces of his kingdom to correct abuses, to redress grievances and to prevent vexatious suits and the partiality of the judges. He endeavoured to banish luxury and extravagance from his court, and paid little attention to magnificent palaces or expensive furniture; but employed his money for the good of his people and for the relief of the poor, especially of poor lepers for whom he gave frequent proofs of his tender concern. Having considered the poor as the proper representatives of Christ; he daily fed 120 of them, and in Lent and Advent his house was open to all who solicited relief. He supported a certain number of reduced gentlemen and of desolate widows; and built for the blind a large house called the hospital of fifteen score, because it contained

300 when it was erected. During the famine which raged in Normandy, Guienne and Poitou he expressed his concern for the poor and afflicted; by ordering them a supply of corn and by excusing those provinces from the usual taxes and customs (*m*). Such were the happy fruits of the religion of this prince; though it must be allowed to have been blended with superstition and in some few points carried to excess. In the life of this prince we may trace the effects of superstition; but pass them over in silence, as they are not chargeable on Christianity but on excesses of it: and the same observation is applicable to many other excellent persons who in some instances ran into extremes both in religion and virtue. Voltaire (*n*) observe that Christianity which ought to have humanized mankind did not hinder Clovis from assassinating the petty sovereigns his neighbours. But how unreasonable to expect that a prince who embraced it merely in compliment to his wife should be perfectly influenced by a religion the genius of which he did not thoroughly understand? So imperfect was his knowledge of it and so ignorant was he of the design of Christ's sufferings, that he exclaimed (*q*) at the recital of them "*had I been present with my valiant Franks I should have revenged his injuries.*"

When the Roman empire was subverted by its barbarous invaders (*r*), it became split

Effects of  
it on the  
laws of the  
Visigoths.

(*m*) Joinville and Matth: Paris:

(*n*) Hist: ch: x.

(*q*) Greg: Turon: Hist: Franc: cap: 21.

(*r*) Marinci lib: iv p: 780.

into

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into different kingdoms each of which formed a government and laws for itself. Most of those barbarians, having no written laws, were assisted in framing them by the codes of Theodosius and Justinian and by the letter or spirit of the Christian religion. We find religious ideas blended with the civil institutions of the first Christian lawgivers; and the laws of the Visigoths, Anglo-Saxons, Lombards, Burgundians, Alamanni, Franks, &c. are admirable for rude nations just emerging from barbarism most of which had no written laws before. If we peruse the codes of many Christian lawgivers as collected by Lindenbrog and Wilkins, we shall be convinced that many of their laws were dictated by the Gospel and by the clergy who employed their influence with religious princes in promoting the public good as well as the interest of the church: tho' certain writers dwell entirely on their avarice, ambition and other vices and suppress every thing that was praiseworthy in them. Nothing can give a better idea of the opinions and manners of a people than their laws; and surely a view of the laws of the Visigoths must convince any man that they were powerfully influenced by the Christian system. Euric or Theodorik king of the Visigoths framed laws for his people who had no written laws, nor any laws but those of custom (1). The laws of Euric were improved by Lewigildus in 575, by Chindaswinthus in 642 and by Receswinthus in 650; and reviewed in 686 by Egica assisted by the 16th council of Toledo. These kings of the Visigoths

§94-

(1) Prolegomena Lindenbrogi.

hed twelve books of laws; in imitation  
e code of Justinian from which they  
wed many of their religious and politi-  
stitutions. The first book of the Visi-  
code urges princes to goodness by reli-  
considerations, and describes the quali-  
of good lawgivers and of good laws on  
tian principles. In the first book a good  
e is promised peace on earth and hap-  
s in heaven, a celestial kingdom in the  
of filthy gold, a crown of glory in-  
of a purple diadem. A prince or law-  
is required to shew his goodness by  
ws, by regarding his subjects more than  
wn private interest, and by being tem-  
e towards the guilty, gentle to stran-  
and more attentive to good works than  
aking orations. Receswinthus enjoined  
to learn justice from the Scriptures;  
to practise this virtue if they wished to  
n the divine favour (*w*). "When earthly  
tentates," says this lawgiver, "advance  
e public good and promote the advan-  
ge of the people with pious compassion,  
ey direct their ambition towards the most  
seful objects. Formerly the immoderate  
petites of princes prompted them to plun-  
er their subjects; but at length the di-  
line spirit has not only restrained their  
cesses but given subjects a reverence for  
e laws." Such pious ideas were proba-  
suggested by the clergy who generally  
ed in the formation of laws, and whole  
ances, excommunications &c. were em-  
ed by the Visigoth kings in punishing

Prolegom: ib; & Lex Wisig: lib. ii p: 10.

the

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ne guilty (x). Upon the whole it appears that Christianity operated powerfully and happily on the laws of the Visigoths; though certain parts of this code are puerile, turbulent or intolerant.

as The code of the Lombards also owes many excellent laws to the Gospel, to the pious princes and to the exertions of the clergy. Autharis the first Christian king of the Lombards framed several regulations against theft, rapine, murder, adultery and other crimes which were common among his subjects (y). The Lombards who settled in Italy about the middle of the 6th century had no written laws until Rotharis and Liutprandus and Charlemagne digested and framed laws for them (z). Rotharis loved justice, encouraged the emancipation of slaves, punished injuries to which servants were exposed and was prompted to acts of mercy by the letter and spirit of the Christian religion. Liutprandus who reigned after Rotharis humanely punished the master who committed adultery with his female slave; he founded his punishment on the sin of violating a divine command. He declared and enacted other laws to avoid the displeasure of God and in compliance with the canons of the church. Charlemagne who vanquished many nations improved their codes; his zeal for religion suggested many laws to the Lombards after he conquered this people. He increased the revenues and influence of the clergy; that they might n

(x) *Ib.* p. 14, 15.

(y) *Anc. Univ. Hist.* vol: vii folio, ch: 15.

(z) *Lindenbrog. Proleg.*

Actually restrain vice: fined those who married widows, orphans or poor people; and hired officers called *comites* to decide their cases justly and not to suffer their suits to be delayed in the courts (a). The bishops led religious kings in modelling their laws according to justice and mercy; and the most official view of those laws evinces that many of them were suggested by religious considerations. The laws of the Visigoths, Lombards, Anglo-Saxons and other barbarous nations whose rulers were pious and good were more attentive to slaves, to the poor or oppressed than the laws of the Ostrogoths, Franks, Burgundians and other barbarians whose lawmakers had little respect for religion or its teachers. The edict of Theodoric king of the Ostrogoths, the Salic law of Clovis, Childebert and Clotharius, and the law of Gundebald king of the Burgundians do not appear to have been influenced by Christianity in the same degree with the laws of other Christian lawgivers. The Salic law which was made by men not zealous for Christianity contained indeed nothing contrary to it; but omitted a regard for widows, orphans &c. until it was reformed by Charlemagne in this essential point. This emperor improved the laws of the Bavarians also in many respects; but chiefly in respect to the poor whom he affirmed to be under the protection of God and of the church (b). A law of the Bavarians prohibited injuring or molesting a stranger; as the Lord hath said ye shall not molest a stranger.

500.

Lex Longob: lib: ii tit: xviii xxii xxxviii,  
Lindenbrog: p. 442, 444 & Prolegom.



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or a foreigner (\*). Even those Christian princes who had little zeal for religion were so far under its influence that they seldom command or forbid any thing not agreeable to the Scriptures; which makes their codes less exceptionable than those of other barbarians who were total strangers to the Christian religion. However we find in the codes of those nations whose lawgivers were less influenced by religion some particular laws the fruits of it: which laws are occasionally exhibited in different parts of this work. The well informed lawyer must respect Christianity for the laws it gave rise to: and every man who has read even slightly the laws of Theodosius and Justinian, or the codes of the Visigoths, Lombards, Anglo-Saxons and other barbarians must venerate Christianity as the source of many just and merciful laws which were totally unknown to polished as well as uncivilized Pagans.

Its effects  
on the  
Saxons &  
other bar-  
barians.

If we consider the state of other barbarians before their conversion to Christianity we must be convinced it enlarged their minds, softened their hearts and abolished cruel practices which subsisted among them. Of all barbarous nations none stood more in need of the light of the Gospel than the Saxons. They were idolatrous and cruel, drew presages from the chirping of birds and the neighing of horses, worshipped demons, sacrificed human victims and violated both divine and human laws without scruple (c). They had an idol called Irminfula which was tremen-

(\*) Lindenbrog: Lex Baioar: tit: iv cap: 14:

(c) Adam: Bremen: p. 8.

ally expressive of the martial spirit prevalent among them. The idol was an armed figure of a man with a cock on the helmet, a lion on the breast-plate and a lion on the shield. The temple of this idol was served by priests who pretended to elucidate mysteries and to foretell events, from the manner in which blood flowed from captives whose wounds they cut or whose veins they had opened. These hideous practices were totally inconsistent with Christianity and necessarily persisted among all its professors. A writer of the 6th century thus expresses the shocking condition of the Saxons and their improvement under bishop Felix in consequence of their conversion.

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III.

*Upera Gens Saxo, vivens quasi more ferino  
& medicante, sacram bellua reddit ovem.*

Never the majority of the Saxons remained unconverted to the end of the 8th century; when they were subdued by Charlemagne and compelled to receive the Gospel and submit to his authority. He exerted himself to propagate and establish Christianity among the Huns, Frisians and other barbarians whose conversion was imperfect; to render them less fierce and more submissive to his government, and to induce them to cultivate the arts of peace instead of annoying their neighbours by piracy or war (f). "During Charlemagne's reign," says Helmold (g), the word of God was disseminated

Meibomii Irminfula cap: iii, iv, vii.

Fortunatus ad Felicem Biblioth: Patrum. vol: x.

Alberti Stadenfis Chron: & Eginhardi vita Caroli Magni.

Chron: i, 3.

" among

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“ among all the nations of the Slavi and  
 “ thawed the gelid cold of the north by the  
 “ heat of the divine word.”

Its effects  
 on the  
 Bulgarians,  
 Moravians  
 & Bohe-  
 mians.

About the middle of the 9th century the Bulgarians, Marchomanni and Bohemians were shockingly idolatrous, sacrificed animals in honour of woods, nymphs and demons, imagined such sacrifices cured diseases and that they themselves possessed a prophetic spirit while they offered them (*a*). We are assured (*b*) they had the faces of men with the hearts of beasts, treated polished nations with arrogance and annoyed the inhabitants of Constantinople by their violence and barbarity. Theodora and the emperor Michael called a council of the wisest sages to devise some expedient for civilizing those barbarians, humbling their pride and conciliating their regards: and the council agreed that the best expedient was to convert them to Christianity. For that purpose they first sent on Cyril and Methodius natives of Constantinople, men distinguished for piety, learning and exemplary manners, and set them to learn the Slavic tongue to fit them for teachers. These apostles were well received by Bogores king of Bulgaria who was fond of painting, and on that account became particularly attached to Methodius who excelled in that art. The king having desired him to exhibit some terrific picture; the apostle represented the final judgment, the crash of dissolving elements and the destruction of the human race in such tremendous colours that

(*a*) Dubravii Hist: lib: i cap: 2.

(*b*) Balbini Miscellan: Bohemizæ, Moravizæ, Silesizæ & Sarmatizæ.

barbarian was terrified. Cyril the other  
 ioner having informed the king that Christ  
 to be the judge on that great day and  
 lained his doctrines; the king embraced  
 n and all the nobles and people followed  
 example. These pious men then quitted  
 garia, came to Moravia and in five years  
 verted Suatoplucus and his subjects, abo-  
 ed Paganism and substituted the practice  
 the Christian virtues. Borivorius prince  
 Bohemia, having been on a visit at the  
 irt of Suatoplucus, received baptism there  
 ether with his suit consisting of 300.  
 e two apostles then went to Bohemia,  
 verted the princess Ludmilla, invented  
 Slavic alphabet, translated the Old and  
 w Testament and some Greek and Ro-  
 1 authors into the Sclavonian language  
 founded schools for acquiring religious,  
 al and literary knowledge (*b*). In all  
 ons where the light of the Gospel shone  
 1 dimly it was productive of some be-  
 cial effects. These effects were not uni-  
 hly produced in the same nation nor even  
 the same district, but varied in different  
 es and places according to the piety and  
 l of princes and the clergy, to the quan-  
 of instruction conveyed and to the qua-  
 of the soil in which the seeds of the  
 spel were sowed. Wincefflaus duke of  
 iernia who flourished in the middle of  
 10th century was pious, humble and  
 perate, and directed his efforts to the  
 pagation of Christianity in Bohemia; in  
 osition to his mother and brother who  
 e inclined to Paganism. Having prevailed

890.

*Ibid.*

against

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III.

against these and against Radislaus p  
Gurima who sided with them, he tu  
thoughts to the encouragement of  
the reformation of abuses and the e  
ment of peace and justice in his do  
He visited the sick, clothed the nake  
tised humility, removed corrupt judg  
nished such nobles as oppressed their  
and made regulations for stopping fut  
pressions (k). However his attach  
Christianity and his pious regulations  
him his life; for he was assassinated by  
contrivance of his own mother and bro  
to the satisfaction no doubt of all Pag  
and tyrants.

Its effects  
on the  
Danes.

There is no part of Christendom wh  
stood more in need of the Gospel than  
Scandinavian nations. Saxo Grammat  
Adamus Bremensis, Dithmar, Arngim Jon  
Keyssler and other authors point out the shock  
ing condition of the Danes, Swedes &c. be  
fore their conversion. The Danes imagine  
their gods especially Odin, Thor and Fre  
were delighted with human victims. Ac  
cording to the Icelandic mythology Od  
the supreme god of the northern nations  
called the terrible and severe god, the fat  
of slaughter, the depopulator, the incendia  
the active and roaring deity, who giv  
victory and reviveth courage in the conf  
who nameth those that are to be slain.  
was believed he often descended to inter  
in the conflict, to inflame the fury of  
combatants, to strike those who were to pe

(k) Dubravii Hist: Boiemix, Æneas Sylvius lib: ii c  
15, Hist: Polon: Corpus.

and to carry their souls to his celestial abodes. Warriors going to battle made a vow to send him a certain number of souls whom he was to receive at Valhalla his ordinary residence. He adopts for his children all who are slain with swords in their hands and admits them as heroes into his palace: they only who died fighting could aspire to the pleasures prepared for them in Valhalla (c). The pleasures they expected in the next world shew what they wished in this, namely, fighting, eating, drinking and women. In Valhalla they expected the daily pleasure of ranging themselves in order of battle and of cutting each other to pieces; but as soon as the hour of repast approached they were to return on horseback all safe and unhurt to eat and drink in the hall of Oden. The flesh of the boar Serimmar was sufficient for them all; every day it was served up at table and every day was renewed again entire. Their drink was beer and mead; one single goat furnished enough of these liquors to intoxicate all the heroes, their cups were the skulls of the enemies they had slain: Oden alone who sat at table by himself drank wine for his entire liquor. A crowd of virgins waited upon the heroes at table and filled their cups as fast as they emptied them (a). It was the hope of such joys which prompted the Scandinavians to defy death and even seek it with ardour. The following extracts from the ode of king Regner Lodbrog point out the genius of the northern nations. We fought with swords that day wherein I saw ten thousand of my foes rolling in the dust

(c) Mallet Northern Antiq: ch: vi.

(a) Keyser's Antiq: Sept: sect: ii, p: 156.

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near a promontory in England. A dew of blood distilled from our swords. The pleasure of that day was equal to that of clasping a fair virgin in my arms, or of kissing a young widow at the head of the table. In the isles of the south died many of my valiant warriors. In the shower of arms Rogvaldur fell, I lost my son. The birds of prey bewailed his fall, they lost him that prepared them banquets. What is the happy portion of the brave but to fall in the midst of a storm of arrows (*m*)! That king thus expressed himself (*a*) a little before his death. We are cut to pieces with swords, but this fills me with joy when I think on the feast that is preparing for me in Oden's palace. Quickly, quickly seated in the splendid habitation of the gods, we shall drink beer out of the skulls of our enemies. A brave man fears not to die, I shall utter no timorous words as I enter into the hall of Oden. According to the northern mythology (*b*) they who died of disease or old age fared miserably in the next world. To such the palace of death was anguish, her table famine, her waiters were expectation and delay, the threshold of her door was precipice, her bed leanness, she was livid and ghastly and her very looks inspired horror. In consequence of such notions of futurity some rather than die in their beds got themselves carried into the field of battle and died there, or put themselves to death in some other way (*c*). Surely such opinions tended to render the Scandinavian nations fierce and desperate and to inspire them with

(*m*) Mallet.(*a*) Mallet ch. vi.(*b*) Edda table x.(*c*) Mallet ch. ix.

An enthusiastic thirst for blood. Even the Danish women exercised war and piracy and had their amazons; lest the Greeks alone should boast of them (*d*). The Pagan Danes offered human victims to their gods, captives in time of war, slaves in time of peace, and in case of a famine or other public calamity their king, as the highest price for averting the divine anger. They entertained such erroneous ideas of a future state that they sometimes put themselves to death in compliance with their superstitions; and on the death of a hero or chief, his arms, his cocks, his charger, dogs and domestic attendants were placed with him on the pile: his dependants, friends and favourite wife frequently solicited death to serve him in Oden's palace (*e*). Such erroneous opinions were necessarily exploded and such practices restrained by a religious system which declared the pleasures of the next world to be such as eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. Self-murder, human sacrifices drunkenness and other crimes founded on aganism must have been abolished together with the superstitions which caused them: and in fact we find that Christianity by removing those superstitions rendered the Danes less cruel and less prodigal of life to their own advantage and for the happiness of their neighbours. These happy effects were produced by the learning and piety of Ebbo, Angarius and other bishops who were employed in the work of conversion, and who

(*d*) Pontani lib: i, p: 29. Edit. Amstelod: 1631.

(*e*) Dithmar lib: i, cap: 12. Saxo, viii. Mallet xii.  
Bartholinus de causis contemptæ mortis apud Danos, lib: ii cap: 12.



CHAP.  
III.

224.

zealously encountered the selfishness of the Pagan priests and the prejudices of the most cruel and ferocious of all people. The unremitting endeavours of a succession of such men gradually abated the ferocity of the barbarians who must have been influenced by the gentleness, loving-kindness and charities of the missionaries. Ebbo arch-bishop of Rheims who was sent to Denmark converted many; but the glory of that work was reserved for Ansgarius who engaged in it in the middle of the 9th century and whose character fitted him admirably for the arduous task. He was regular in his private devotions, temperate in his diet, modest and free from vanity, charitable to the poor, a powerful preacher and bore with magnanimity the persecutions of Pagans and the reproach of enemies. He was constantly employed in redeeming captives, comforting the afflicted, instructing the ignorant and evangelizing barbarians; he built several hospitals and daily ministered to the sick in one of them at Bremen. We cannot then wonder at the following compliment which was paid him by his successor Rembertus: Kings honoured him, pastors revered him, the clergy thought him a model for imitation and all the people admired him (a). However much was left to his successors to accomplish. Rembertus, Regino and other pious men exerted themselves with success in converting the Danes and Swedes to the Gospel and to tenderness. Though the Pagan Danes were so hard-hearted that they never wept (w); yet some of

(a) Adam: Brem: p. xxiv. Rembert: in Mabill: Annal: 865, and D'Achery.

(w) Adam: Brem: p. 133.

them who were converted by Egino were softened to such a degree by his pious exhortations that they burst into tears from a sorrow for their sins, and even brought their treasures and laid them at his feet. This pious and disinterested prelate returned them their money, and exhorted them to build churches, to redeem captives, to feed the poor and to perform other works of piety and charity. We may reasonably conclude that Christianity, which produced such effects on the manners of these people reclaimed the robberies and piracies which were common among them. They considered theft as disgraceful, but deemed robbery and rapine especially against foreigners as lawful and honourable (*c*). The Danish pirates were licenced by the king to exercise piracy (*d*); and in Denmark and other northern kingdoms princes and nobles engaged in it as the most honourable of professions. Some even practised it on a religious principle and to purchase accommodations in the next world; scrupling to deprive their families of their own lawful possessions (*e*). The northern pirates were terrible to their neighbours, until their violence was abated by the Christian institution which softened their manners and rendered them less prone to slaughter and rapine (*f*). The Gospel forbids us to covet other men's goods; and several of the clergy discouraged piracy as contrary to its letter and spirit. However Christianity did not entirely abolish piracy in Denmark

(*c*) Stiernhook lib: ii, cap: 3, 5. Braſton p: 150, folio  
Furtum privatum & publicum. Spelman vox felonja.

(*d*) Adam: Brem. ib.

(*e*) Ib: p. xxvi.

(*f*) Krantzius.

CHAP.  
III.

but considerably abated it; rendered Christian pirates less cruel than their Pagan ancestors and their depredations less frequent than in former times.

Its effects  
on the  
Swedes &  
Norwegi-  
ans.

The Swedes also were in a deplorable state before they embraced the Gospel. They sacrificed men to their gods, especially to Oden (*g*), looked on robbery and piracy as noble actions, and held rapes in such honour that the ravisher of the wife or daughter of an enemy was praised and celebrated in the songs of the bards (*b*). In Norway, those pirates who had large fleets were honoured with the title of kings; and it was a maxim with the people that pirates were not bound by any law (*i*). In the northern kingdoms neither the rich nor poor scrupled to expose their children (*k*); and the great did so in Norway and Sweden in compliance with their superstitions. Haquin king of Norway sacrificed his two sons, to induce the gods to grant him victory over Harold; and Aune king of Sweden sacrificed nine sons to Oden for the prolongation of his life (*l*). Christianity produced its usual effects on the inhabitants of these kingdoms. Ansgarius and other pious missionaries abolished human sacrifices among their converts and discouraged rapes, robbery, piracy and other crimes which were incompatible with its letter or spirit. About the middle of the 9th century, Bero king of Sweden embraced the Gospel and allowed Ansgarius to preach it to his subjects; and multitudes were con-

(*g*) Wormii Monumenta Danica, lib: i cap: 5. Loccenii Antiq: cap: iii, p. 13. (*k*) Stiernhook, lib: ii, cap: 1.

(*i*) Torfæi Hist:

(*k*) Ibid.

(*l*) Wormii Mon: Dan: lib: i cap: 5 & Albert: Krantz: Danis iv: 10, 13:

verted by his virtues and instructions. However all were not converted by this pious missionary, their conversion was gradual; and Olaus Skottonung was the first Swedish king whose subjects were all Christians (*m*). The gentle spirit of the Gospel mitigated the roughness of the northern nations and disposed their hearts to tenderness and mercy. Several kings of Sweden were influenced in their conduct and counsels by the clergy; and the virtues and laws of the former do honour to their teachers. In the lives and laws of those princes we may easily trace the influence of Christianity; and surely the virtues and wise political regulations of rulers were likely to produce happy effects on their barbarous subjects. Stenchil 2d, though an expert archer, of gigantic strength and a great warrior, was a pious king, pleased his subjects by his goodness, restored concord in his kingdom and reigned in peace (*n*). Ingo the successor of Stenchil surpassed his predecessors in valour, in zeal for propagating Christianity and in every virtue. He reformed multitudes by his mildness, liberality and benevolence, and employed severity against his nobles where his exemplary virtues failed to reform them (*o*). We may in some measure ascribe the virtues of Ingo to Æschillus an English bishop who followed the venerable Sigfrid from England (*p*); nor can we too much admire many ecclesiastics of those days who were zealous

(*m*) Johan: Magnus lib: xvii cap. 2, 16 & Mabill. Annal: A. D. 829.

(*n*) Ib: lib: xviii cap: 8, 9.

(*o*) Ib: cap: 11.

(*p*) Ib: p: 584.

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III.

lous in making profelytes to religion and to virtue. Halstan the successor of Ingo was mild, modest and benevolent; and so possessed of a true Christian spirit that he kindly interpreted every rash word and even defended in court those who had injured him (q). Other kings who succeeded Halstan and who had been carefully educated in the Christian religion did it honour by their piety and virtues. Eric, Carolus, Canute, Bergerus Jarlus and other Christian lawgivers enacted laws on religious principles (r). Eric who succeeded Suercher on the throne of Sweden was strictly educated in the doctrines of Christianity and canonized after his death for his piety and goodness. This prince was zealous for the honour of God and of religion, built churches and was prompted to good works by Henry arch-bishop of Upsal who was a pious and good man. Eric became a model of piety, justice, mildness and liberality; and his character was made up of shining, heroical, pious and useful qualities. Who, says the historian (s), was more remarkable for comforting the afflicted, relieving the oppressed or protecting the widow and the orphan? None was more liberal in giving alms, more courteous in conversation, more animated in his orations, more just in giving judgment, more merciful to the penitent, more a master of his passions &c. &c. (x). He laboured to promote concord among his subjects; and was so far from plundering them that he with

(q) Ib. cap: 12.

(r) Vide Stiernhook de jure Sueonum.

(s) Joh: Magnus lib: xix cap. 4 p: 602.

(x) Pantaleon pars 2 p: 190.

ty accepted the entire tribute usually  
o the kings of Sweden. He enacted  
just and humane laws which were  
ards a refuge to the oppressed and  
by all tyrants. Charles who succeed-  
ic on the throne was a pious and  
prince, required an observance of  
s of Eric and of Christianity, erect-  
riches, loved justice and did not suffer  
innocent to be oppressed with impuni-

CHAP.  
III.

1160.

Canute the son of Eric and the  
or of Charles deserved the appellation  
true Christian prince; for his piety,  
ties and for the laws he enacted. He  
uid endowed churches, laboured to ci-  
the Swedes and to make them good  
ans both in profession and practice;  
as assisted by the arch-bishop of Up-  
whose advice he was extremely atten-  
) and who probably suggested some  
pious and excellent laws. Eric the

Canute who succeeded to the throne  
ed Valerius the venerable arch-bishop  
sal as a father, listened to his coun-  
d exerted his influence that his sub-  
ould observe them. This bishop re-  
d the king to many of his enemies,  
eailed on him to forgive some whom  
ght have justly punished, and to ap-  
no governors of provinces who were  
interested men and more attentive to  
od of his subjects than to encreasing  
venues. To Christianity we may fairly  
the happiness enjoyed by the subjects.

1210.

h: Magnus ibid cap: 6. 7.  
: cap: 8, 9.

## CHAP.

## III.

1250.

1028.

of religious princes who attended to the counsels of venerable prelates. Bergerus Jarlus who was administrator of Sweden zealously discouraged vice and promoted the practice of religion and morality. He appointed prefects less attentive to exaction than to the public interest; and his political regulations were such as might be expected from a religious and good man (*a*). Thrandis a pious king of Norway forbade the exposure of infants and other detestable practices contrary to the Gospel; and prevailed on his subjects to swear to an observance of his laws (*b*).

Olavus a religious prince improved those laws, laboured to abolish some obscene customs and employed bishop Grimkil to assist him in this work. Olavus was canonized for his piety and his aid invoked for restoring health, removing distress and for success in any project which men had to execute (*c*). In Norway the laws of Christian lawgivers recommended the love of God and the practice of virtue; and required kings to rule agreeably to law, in the name of Christ, for the glory of God and for the good of their subjects. These laws enjoin men to renounce the devil and all his works, namely, lying, perjury, deceit, adultery, fornication, impurity, theft, gaming, discord, lasting anger, hatred, envy and other vices; as displeasing to God and pernicious to the souls, fortunes and health of his creatures. To men guilty of those vices one of the Norwegian laws recommends repentance; as profitable to the

(*a*) Ibid cap: 18.

(*b*) Torfæi Hist: tom: iii p: 63.

(*c*) Snorro Sturlon: pars vii cap: 51 & seq:—& Pantaleon pars 2da p: 110.

offenders

offenders and acceptable to God (*d*). A CHAP.  
III. writer (*e*) of the 11th century thus exultingly expresses the happy change wrought by the Gospel on the northern nations: "Behold the Danes, Swedes and other ferocious nations who formerly uttered barbarous sounds like the neighing of horses have been taught to sing halleluiahs in praise of God! Behold a people who depopulated France and Germany by piracy and rapine are now satisfied with their own boundaries! Behold a district always inaccessible on account of idolatry and no less cruel than the worshippers of the Scythian Diana now divesting themselves of their national ferocity, emulously admitting the evangelical preachers, destroying altars consecrated to demons, erecting churches and unanimously celebrating the name of Christ." A celebrated French author thus represents the beneficial effects of Christianity on the northern nations: "It was an event" says Mallet (*f*) "which viewed only in a philosophical light should be considered as the dawn of the happy days which were afterwards to shine forth with superior splendor. In effect this religion tended to correct the abuse of licentious liberty, to banish bloody dissension, to restrain robbery and piracy, to soften ferocity of manners, to require a certain knowledge of letters and history, to re-establish a part of mankind who were miserably enslaved in their natural rights and to introduce a relish for a life

(*d*) Dolmeri Jus Antiquum Norweg: cap: i, xxxvii, xxxviii.

(*e*) Adam: Bremen: De Situ Daniæ cap: ult:

(*f*) Northern Antiq:



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III.

“ of peace and an idea of happiness independent of sensual gratifications.” Most of these remarks apply equally to the improved condition of the Russians, Poles, Prussians and other nations in consequence of their conversion.

Its effects  
on the  
Russians.

We know but little of the Russians until their conversion: before that period they were so illiterate as to be incapable of relating their own exploits and so fierce as to discourage visits from polished nations. Before his conversion Walodimir immolated human victims to his idols, kept 200 concubines in one place, 300 in another and as many in a third. His grandmother Olha was instructed in Constantinople in the doctrines of Christianity and baptized; while Walodimir and his subjects adhered to the gods of their ancestors. This emperor having been solicited by various sects of Christians to adopt their respective tenets, employed commissioners to enquire into the doctrines and tenets of each; and having acquired that information, acquainted Basilus and Constantine kings of Constantinople he would become a Christian after the Greek manner provided they gave him their sister Anna to wife. This proposal having been agreed to and the ceremony of baptism performed the monarch of Russia dismissed his concubines, broke several idols and flung into a river the image of thunder which was the chief object of their worship. This prince though an imperfect Christian both in theory and practice established schools for Greek literature, brought artists from Greece, built churches of brick and stone, appointed bishops

bishops in Kiow, Novogard and other places, adopted the rites of the Greek church and commanded all his subjects to relinquish their idols and submit to baptism. We may conclude that the subjects were influenced in the usual way by the Christian doctrines; and we are sure that the form of inauguration of the Russian princes tended to improve them in religion and virtue. This form reminded them of their subjection to the king of kings, of regard to the poor, of preserving their subjects in peace and justice and tended to render them pious and good men (g). Mr. Gibbon sneeringly observes that thousands of Russians acquiesced in the truth and excellence of a doctrine which had been embraced by the great duke and his boyars. The authority of a prince might have been a strong argument with barbarians in respect to the truth of a doctrine; but the most unpolished barbarian must have been competent to judge of the excellence of a religion which required him to love God and his neighbour, to injure no person by word or deed, to imitate Christ in gentleness and humility, in charity, forgiveness and other practical duties. Yet that writer is so injudicious or so prejudiced as to observe that those barbarous nations submitted to a religion more different in theory than in practice from the worship of their native idols; as if it was a mere heap of vain superstitions without any mixture of moral precepts!

(g) Rerum Polon: Scriptores tom: ii p: 16, 21—Sigismund de rebus Muscoviticis p: 7, 21—Crom: lib: i cap: 10—Purchas Pilgrim vol: iii p: 420—Bauduri de Conversione Russorum.—I have not seen Bauduri.

## CHAP. III.

*Its effects  
on the  
Silesians  
& Poles.*

Before the conversion of the Silesians and Poles they were illiterate and idolatrous; despised letters and learned men (*a*) and were not less fierce than the other barbarians of the north. The Quadi a people of Silesia worshipped their swords (*b*) as gods; and the Poles adored Jupiter, Mars, Venus, the image of thunder and other idols. When prince Miesko and several of his subjects were baptized he dismissed his seven wives; and no doubt practised some virtues required by the Gospel; though he and his Christian subjects still retained strong marks of their ancient character after they embraced it. During divine service when the priest repeated the words, here beginneth a certain chapter of a Gospel, every man drew his sword to the middle out of the sheath; to shew he was prepared to defend it: but the priest proceeding to read he put his sword into the sheath. Christianity was propagated but thinly in Poland 'till prince Miceslaus dragged about the image of thunder at a horse's tail, flung it into a river and abolished incantations, augury and other superstitions (*c*). The Gospel and its teachers no doubt improved the morals of the Poles, and the admonitions employed at the coronation of a Polish prince were excellent lessons and such as were unknown to other nations. He is reminded by the clergy that he is the servant of God, that his exalted rank is full of anxious care, that he is to exercise his power for the

(*a*) Cromer's Hist: lib: i cap: 3 tom: i pars 2a p: 237, 238 Alaman: rerum Scriptores.

(*b*) Beatus Rhenanus rerum Germ: lib: i p: 68 & Curii Annales Silesiæ.

(*c*) Guagn: Crom: Hist: Polon: Hist: Corpus tom: ii p: 19, 20, 346 & tom: iii p: 436.

benefit of his subjects and not for his own emolument, to protect widows and orphans against oppression, to defend the poor and the weak against the rich and powerful, to behave mildly and affably to all and to aspire not so much to temporal rewards for his good deeds as to eternal compensations (*d*). In no period of the Polish history was there any man more pious or more an enemy to vice than Stanislaus who was bishop of Cracow towards the end of the 11th century. He fed the hungry, clothed the naked, relieved the sick and was neither afraid nor ashamed to rebuke vice wherever it appeared, even in persons of the most exalted station. He had an opportunity of displaying his piety and public spirit against king Boleslaus who was guilty of unnatural crimes, of tyranny, oppression and exaction on his subjects—He privately admonished him to drop his immoral practices; lest some evil should befall himself and his kingdom; that such practices were more mischievous in princes than in private persons, that the divine commands oblige kings as well as their subjects and that it was mad to prefer false and momentary indulgences with eternal torments to true pleasures and everlasting joys. In short he remonstrated with so much piety and strength that the king seemed convinced of his errors and disposed to a reformation. But the bishop having found that he relapsed into his usual excesses repeatedly assured him that if he persisted in them, he must cut him off from the communion of the church. The king

1079.

(d) Hist: Polon: Corpus tom: ii p: 373.

reproach-

CHAP. reprecated him with want of respect to the  
III. royal dignity and left him abruptly. The  
bishop went again to court to solicit him  
to repent; but having found him obstinate  
excommunicated him and forbade him to en-  
ter into the church. The king having ap-  
peared at church notwithstanding, the bishop  
stopped the service: which so exasperated  
the king that the bishop's friends advised  
him to retire to a chapel near Cracow.  
The king sent a party of soldiers to drag  
him out of the chapel and the soldiers un-  
dertook the task; but the venerable aspect  
of the prelate filled them with such respect  
that they were unable to execute his or-  
ders. They fell on their knees and quitted  
the church in that humble attitude: the  
king sent a second and a third party who  
acted successively like the first. He then  
lost all patience, called them cowards and  
not soldiers, women not men and exclaimed  
are ye not able to bring out one priest on  
whom I may satiate my vengeance? He  
then rushed into the church, killed the bi-  
shop with his own hand at the foot of the  
altar and ordered his body to be cut in  
pieces (e). This was an effect of irreligion;  
and the contrast between the piety and pu-  
rity of the bishop and the impiety, vices  
and cruelty of the king must have inspired  
every man with veneration for the one and  
abhorrence of the other. However the pi-  
ety and virtues of other personages in Po-  
land made some amends for the vices of this  
monster. Hedwigis dutchess of Poland was  
celebrated for piety, placidness of temper

1130.

(e) Cromer lib: iv.

and for patient resignation under disasters which might appear almost insupportable. CHAP. III.  
 She regulated her family by the maxims of the Gospel and laboured to banish from her house lies, detraction and every thing contrary to it's letter and spirit. She entertained a contempt for the gaudy ornaments of dress, wished to be distinguished rather by her virtues than by her exterior appearance, and had considerable influence on her husband by her piety and virtues. After her marriage to the duke he became so active in promoting religion and administering justice that he was considered a support to the weak and as a father to his people (f). Surely the example of this couple must have improved their subjects in religion and virtue!

Christianity produced good fruits in Hungary at and after its first establishment in that kingdom; and few nations stood more in need of its doctrines and motives. Rhegino thus described the character of the Hungarians of the 9th century. They live not like men but beasts, are said to feed on raw flesh, drink blood, cut men's hearts in pieces and devour them, are haughty, stubborn, fraudulent, seditious and hard-hearted; their women are as ferocious as the men. This was their character in the 9th century when they rushed forth from Scythia, overran Saxony, Bavaria and other parts of Germany with barbarous cruelty without sparing even females

Its effects on the Hungarians.

289.

(f) Polon: Hist: Corpus tom: ii p: 40, 115 & Cursi An: sales Silesie.

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or the ministers of religion (b). A writer (c) of the 10th century speaks of them as a people whose cruelty had been felt by almost all nations. In that century they laid waste Italy, France and other places with savage barbarity, and worshipped Hercules and Mars before they were converted. How happy for such a people and for their neighbours that their hearts were mollified by the mild precepts of the Gospel which transformed them into a just, gentle and humane nation? This change was wrought early in the 11th century by Geyfas and his son Stephen, chiefly by the latter. When Geyfa who was duke of Hungary towards the end of the 10th embraced Christianity, he laid aside all thoughts of war and resolved to spend the remainder of his days in devotion and peace; and his piety and peaceable disposition must have checked the ferocious spirit so prevalent in those days. His son Stephen was baptized or confirmed by Adalbert a pious bishop, whose religious and moral lectures produced happy effects. As the youth grew up he harangued forcibly on religion, justice and charity, inveighed against Scythic cruelty, murders and adultery, exhorted his father to remit or lighten taxes on his subjects, to relieve the distressed and to condescend to the lowly as well as to the high. By such means he acquired such influence that he abolished the worship of Hercules and Mars, converted the nation from Paganism to Christianity, and was proclaimed king of Hungary during the life-time and with the approbation of his

(b) Rhegino Chron. lib. 2. A. D. 889.

(c) Luitprandus, lib: 1, cap: 2.

father. On his decease the young king invited several priests and monks to preach the Gospel in Hungary, and often pointed out it's excellence himself to several of his subjects assembled together. He rigorously forbade several crimes which had been long committed with impunity, and some barbarous customs which the Hungarians learned in Scythia and retained to his time (*d*). Having considered himself as the father of his people he examined into their circumstances, provided for several poor families and protected widows, orphans and other destitute persons. Though loaded with business he was accessible to all who desired to acquaint him with their grievances, and if he made any distinction of persons it was in favour of the wretched. In short his religion had an happy effect on others and supported himself under a load of afflictions. He bore with patience a sickness of three years, and the loss of all his children the eldest of which was a youth of excellent qualities. Thus circumstanced he did not utter a complaint against the Disposer of all things; but adored the conduct of providence, submitted to all it's dispensations without a murmur, and even thanked the Almighty for taking his favourite child before his innocence was corrupted. Such were the effects of faith and hope in God! His character is strongly marked in his instructions for his son of which the following is a summary. A king should be pious and merciful; a king polluted with impiety or cruelty is rather a tyrant than a king. Treat



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your barons, counts and soldiers as fathers and brothers, rule them without pride or anger, remember all are of one nature, that nothing raises men like humility or depresses them like pride and envy. Restrain lust, be hospitable to strangers, and patient to all as the Scriptures enjoin: be patient to the humble and practise humility yourself, that God may exalt you here and hereafter.— Unless you obey these injunctions, your temporal crown will be unsafe; and you cannot obtain an everlasting kingdom (e). Christianity had considerable influence also on Ladislaus who reigned in Hungary near the end of the 11th century. He possessed every advantage of body and mind; was tall and majestic and a happy mixture of calmness and courage. The most striking parts of his character were piety, charity, chastity and disinterestedness; and the vices he most detested were avarice and ambition. He was unanimously chosen king, but strenuously declined the office; from diffidence of himself and because he imagined the crown properly belonged to another. He possessed a mastery over his passions, was the assertor of Hungarian modesty and Hungarian liberty and a safe refuge to the miserable. His virtues were felt by the beggar whom he succoured, by the oppressed whom he relieved and by virgins whom he delivered from the ravisher or portioned out of his treasury (f). He required his own household to be an example to the whole nation;

(e) Stephani Decreta in Ronfinio.

(f) Bonfin: decad 2 lib: iv p: 219, 232.

and surely the virtues of a king and his court must have had considerable influence on the manners of a whole nation!

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Some northern nations remained unconverted and retained their superstitions and savage manners to a very late period. The Prussians worshipped the sun, moon, storms, thunder, snakes and insects, sacrificed prisoners of war to their idols, burned with the deceased their arms, horses and most valuable clothes, permitted polygamy, practiced promiscuous copulation, put to death the sick where they despaired of their recovery and strangled their aged or feeble parents. They subsisted on raw flesh and milk mixed with the blood of horses, were strangers to agriculture and to the arts of civilization, knew no rule of right but brute force, had no property but what was common, possessed few good qualities but kindness to the shipwrecked (*g*), and were far superior to beasts 'till they incorporated with the Sudini from whom we allow they learned agriculture and various arts of industry even before their conversion. Yet their ferocity was little abated by their connection with this people: for they killed the Duke Adalbert who attempted to convert them, and were with difficulty induced to submit to baptism by a dread of Boleslaus King of Poland, and afterwards by the Teutonic knights of St. Mary of Jerusalem (*b*). And though dread and compulsion made

Its effects on the Prussians.

997.

1164.

1216.

(*g*) Helmoldus lib: i cap: 1.

(*b*) Erasmus Stella de Borussia Antiq: Æneas Sylvius, Guagninus on Sarmatia, Poland, Livonia & Prussia—Cromer lib: iii c: 3: Polen; Corpus.

them

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them only nominal Christians at first, yet were they gradually led from ignorance to knowledge, from idolatry to true worship, from poverty and wretchedness to an acquaintance with the comforts of life, from ferocity to gentleness and from barbarism to civilization. Were it not for Christianity and its teachers Frederick 2d. and his subjects would probably have been as ignorant, idolatrous and brutal in the 18th century as their ancestors were in the 13th.

*Sirenium voces et Circes pocula nosti  
Qua si cum sociis lætus cupidusque bibisset  
Vixisset canis immundus vel amica luto jus.*

Who could imagine that a religion to which Prussia was indebted for important benefits would meet an enemy in Frederick 2d. who affected to be wiser than other kings? That prince must be weak in intellect who should think moral virtue unnecessary to his subjects; or who should disregard the best moral system that ever was devised without recommending any substitute. That ruler must want information as well as intellect who does not know that his subjects will entertain religious opinions of some kind, true or false, useful or mischievous; and that if he does not direct their veneration to worthy objects they may attach themselves to cruel or impure gods or even to the beasts that perish. If ground is not sowed with good seeds it will produce noxious weeds in abundance; and the man who is not well instructed in religion and morality is in danger of being a knave, an enthusiast or a bigot, a turbulent man or a slave. Had not Frederick

Frederick been the vain dupe of Voltaire he must have respected Christianity for its political benefits: history would have informed him that the Gospel improved the morals of polished as well as barbarous states, exploded the cruel practices of both, taught them virtues to which they were strangers, and still tends to prevent relapses to barbarism, to cruelty and to immorality.

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The Livonians (i) were idolatrous in their worship and barbarous in their manners, 'till Meinardus a pious man went from Lubec with some merchants to evangelize this people. For this purpose he built himself a wooden cottage, contracted an intimacy with those barbarians by his piety and simplicity, and gradually led many of them from the worship of idols to the knowledge and practice of Christian duties. Meinardus was succeeded in the pious work by Albertus; and after him a second Albertus instituted an order of knights for the purpose of extirpating barbarism and civilizing this people. Before the reign of Elizabeth (k) queen of Portugal the Gospel produced its usual effects in that kingdom; but operated in an extraordinary manner during the reign of this princess who was distinguished for piety, charity and humility. She was so thoroughly persuaded of the vanity of dress and of the idle amusements of the great, that she employed the time and money commonly spent in that way in acts of devotion and charity. She passed her time in reading devout books,

Its effects  
on the Li-  
vonians &  
Portu-  
guese.  
1209.

1309.

(i) Cromer lib: viii—Hist: Polon: Corpus tom: i p: 65.

(k) Mariana de rebus Hisp: xv: 18 & John de Torres—  
This writer I have not seen.

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in attending divine service, or in relieving the poor especially such as had been reduced from affluence to poverty. She visited the sick and served them, dressed their wounds and placed indigent females under the direction of prudent and virtuous matrons. This queen reclaimed several prostitutes, endowed a large house for the reception of penitents, established a royal foundation for foundlings, and possessed an extraordinary talent for reconciling differences and terminating suits.

Its effects  
on the  
Lithuani-  
ans.

Christianity produced happy effects among the Lithuanians who were the last people of Europe converted to it. This people worshipped the sun, fire, thunder, woods, serpents and asps, immolated a chief captive taken in war and buried with deceased heroes their horses, hounds, arms and most faithful domestics. If the sun happened to be obscured for some days by clouds, the terrified people met to avert the divine anger by human sacrifices; if that luminary was eclipsed, the greatest consternation prevailed and outrageous savages immolated miserable captives. All these superstitious and cruel practices were abolished, when Jagello the great duke of Lithuania and a Heathen was married to the princess of Poland and baptized by the name of Uladislaus. As soon as he received baptism and the instruction which always accompanied it, he set himself to convince his deluded subjects of the impotence of their gods, as the first step towards their sincere conversion. For that purpose he ordered the sacred fire to be extinguished in the sight of its worshippers, the altar on which human victims were im-  
molated

molated to be destroyed, the woods where they performed their superstitious rites to be cut down, and the serpents to be killed in the presence of weeping barbarians. At first the idolaters expected to see the Christian Poles who destroyed their idols blasted by lightning, or some other instrument of divine vengeance; but finding they suffered no injury they exclaimed, is it not strange that our gods would suffer their rites to be thus insulted by wicked Christians? If one of us treated them thus we would instantly feel the effects of the divine vengeance! Thus convinced of the vanity of their idols they readily listened to the instructions of the Polish divines, consented to be baptized and experienced the happy change usually wrought by the letter and spirit of Christianity (1). It is not asserted in this work that its professors even in the purest ages of the church were unexceptionable in their doctrines or practices; but that they were more virtuous and less vicious than before they embraced it. The lustre of noble virtues has frequently been tarnished by austerity and seclusion from the world; and men considerably improved in knowledge and virtue have retained some of their former errors and vices though somewhat abated. Christianity operated to the advantage of mankind in numberless instances; nor can it be denied that most of the evils experienced by individuals and societies arose from ignorance, perversion or violation of its precepts.

(1) Hotting. Hist: Ecclesi: sæculum xiv p: 868 vol: iii, Edit: Hamburg—Corp: Hist: Polon: tom: i p: 142, Edit: Basil, tom: ii p: 2—Cromer lib: xv p: 391—from Guaguinus.

## CHAP. III.

*Effects of  
it in Vir-  
ginia and  
other mo-  
dern Pagan  
nations.*

The professors of Christianity abolished cruel practices also in Virginia, Mexico and other modern nations sunk in Paganism. In the province of Virginia in America, its idolatrous inhabitants sometimes sacrificed children to the devil; until the Christian religion was promulgated among them (*m*). In Mexico they kept every twentieth day holy and immolated captives; and on a certain festival drowned a boy and a girl to accompany the idol of a certain lake. 1486. Ahu-itzol the Mexican king sacrificed sixty-four thousand and eighty men at the consecration of a temple; and it is said that human sacrifices are not abolished to this day in the mountainous parts of the empire which was not converted by the Spaniards (*n*). Another abominable custom prevailed in Cholula where, on the decease of the king, the inferior priests held the legs, arms and head of a man who was to be sacrificed; while the chief priest laid open his breast and pulled out his heart to offer to their idols. Besides this act of savage cruelty five or six thousand children were annually sacrificed to the numerous idols of this place; until the hideous practice was abolished by the Spaniards as contrary to the religion and customs of Christendom (*o*). Before the Gospel was preached in Congo, twelve of the king's concubines and court ladies were buried alive with him; and many more solicited that honour. In the kingdom of Metamba subject to Congo they used to put sick persons to death; to shorten as they

(*m*) Harris's Collection of Travels vol: i p: 815 to 848.

(*n*) Acosta's Hist: of the Indies lib: 5 cap 9.

(*o*) Ib: cap: 20:

pretended the continuance of their pains. Some idolatrous provinces of Angola fed on human flesh and sacrificed a number of victims at funerals: until the Christian religion was introduced by the Portuguese (*m*). In the isles of St. Thomas, St. Lawrence and St. James in Africa the inhabitants ate human flesh; 'till they were civilized by the missionaries who improved many nations and islands from Persia to China in morals, in industry and in useful arts (*n*). The Christian code was highly useful in softening the rugged manners of other barbarous tribes, and in remedying the imperfections of their political establishments. Before the beginning of the 15th century the inhabitants of the Canary islands were gross idolaters, worshipped the sun and moon (*o*) and killed strangers and even each other without mercy or compassion. Some of them flung themselves from precipices in honour of a deity whom they worshipped; expecting to enjoy all sorts of happiness after so noble a death. Those customs continued until they were extirpated by the Spaniards who introduced into those islands their religion together with the arts of civilization. It is to be lamented that much mischief has been done by the Spaniards and others to the natives of Mexico, Peru, &c. whom they converted. But surely those mischiefs arose from a violation of the Gospel; might have been prevented by an observance of its precepts: and were inflicted by adventurers who had no object but the accumulation of wealth. Upon

(*m*) Mod: Univ: Hist: vol: iv, folio, book 2.

(*n*) See Bozius de Signis ecclesiæ:

(*o*) Raynald: Annal: 1369.



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the whole it seems fair to ascribe to the Gospel the good effects which naturally resulted from its letter and spirit; and the wicked acts of its professors to a breach of its laws.

Effects of  
it in Para-  
guay and  
other na-  
tions

Charlevoix (*o*) has furnished a striking contrast between the manners of the unconverted and converted inhabitants of Paraguay. Before they embraced Christianity they were cruel and vindictive, had but little feeling for the distresses of a person belonging to their own tribe, and not a spark of benevolence for the distressed members of any other. This people were not only civilized by the missionaries and instructed by them in the arts of industry, but converted into the most humane and benevolent of all people. The Jesuits without any other laws but those of religion kept them decent, moral and industrious. In Paraguay where the government was theocratical the people discharged their duty without any regard to civil penalties; uninfluenced by any motive except future punishments and reversionary compensations. Their obedience was wilful and not the effect of compulsion; and offenders were often known to confess their faults voluntarily and even to solicit punishment to quiet their consciences. We admit that other nations might not be as tractable as the people of Paraguay; but maintain that the principle which kept these in order without the assistance of human laws might and actually did restrain the ferocity of the most savage. It is impossible to peruse the histories of unconverted nations without lamenting their ignorance of an institution which is ca-

(*p*) Hist: of Paraguay.

pable

pable of preventing crimes and promoting the practice of many virtues. Christianity as taught by the Romish clergy was productive of beneficial fruits; and would no doubt have produced happier effects had it been free from errors. Those beneficial fruits were not the offspring of those doctrines and practices which distinguish them from the Reformists; but of those scriptural precepts and prohibitions in which the Romanists and Reformists agree.

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Much credit is due to pious Roman Catholics who have zealously propagated Christianity among modern as well as ancient Pagans; nor have Protestants been less zealous in converting barbarians and abolishing the detestable customs of idolatrous nations. The London society have been at much expence in propagating Christian knowledge among rude nations, in translating religious books for their use, and in dispatching missionaries to instruct and civilize them: the missionaries have generally been Germans or Danes. The natives of India tho' less fierce than other idolatrous nations stood in much need of the Christian religion: to abolish human sacrifices and to render them honest, industrious and amenable to the laws. In the East Indies they sacrifice boys or men for success in war; and many throw themselves into the river Ganges or dispatch themselves on its banks in compliance with their superstitions. "The number of widows who perish on the funeral pile or are buried alive in the same grave with their husbands is as great as ever. Superstition prompts them to lay a sick man at the edge of a river in all seasons

Tendency  
and effects  
of Protestant  
missions.

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“ sons when the whim or interest of his relations may suggest that he is near death. Colonel Martine once walking on the side of the Ganges rescued an old man whom his two sons were drowning; on pretence of those ceremonies which it was their duty to perform in his last hours. The old gentleman it appeared had a trifle of property on which they had for some time past cast an evil eye. He lived for a while in the colonel's tents; but growing weary he preferred returning home at the hazard of not escaping a second time” (*m*). Cruel practices founded on superstition must be exploded with the superstition; no Christian can murder either himself or another without knowing he is acting contrary to the letter and spirit of his religion. The native Indians are shockingly destitute of moral principles. “ I have had,” says a gentleman (*x*) of India, “ transactions with many who are considered as respectable men, men of opulence and good conduct: I declare to you I never met with one who had an idea of the obligation of an oath or who would not break it without scruple, provided the crime could be committed with impunity and productive of gain. There may be natives of a different character; all I can say is that I never met with one. I am speaking of those who are not Christians. Government instead of opposing ought to promote the appointment of missionaries who are zealous for religion. exemplary in their morals, despisers of

(*m*) Account of the London Society's Protestant Missions to the East Indies, p: 144. for the year 1796.

(*x*) *Ib*: Account for the year 1799, p: 148.

“wealth; patient and conciliatory in their  
“manners: Such and only such are fit to be  
“missionaries: Through such men the go-  
“vernment will have better subjects to rule  
“and know better the real state of those sub-  
“jects” (n). In some parts of India the mis-  
sionaries have reformed thievish and plunder-  
ing clans called Collaries who make nightly  
incursions to rob, and steal sheep, oxen and  
whatever they can find. Many of this cast  
live in the Tanjore country, still more in  
Tondiman’s country and many of them in the  
Nabob’s country. The late Mr. Swartz the  
pious and exemplary missionary of India thus  
expressed himself (o) concerning some of these  
people. “When the Collaries committed  
“great outrages in their plundering expedi-  
“tions, Sepoys were sent out to adjust matters;  
“but it had no effect. Government desired  
“me to enquire into that thievish business. I  
“sent letters to the head Collaries: they ap-  
“peared. We found out in some degree  
“how much the Tanjore and Tondomans and  
“the Nabob’s Collaries had stolen; and we  
“insisted on restitution which was done ac-  
“cordingly. At last all gave it in writing that  
“they would steal no more. This promise  
“they kept very well for eight months and  
“then began their old work; however  
“not as before. Had that inspection over  
“their conduct been continued they might  
“have been made useful people.—Some  
“of those thievish Collaries having desired to  
“be instructed I said, I am obliged to in-

(n) Ibid: Protestant Missions to the East Indies, in 1799, p: 148.

(o) Account of Protestant Missions in 1794, p: 120 & seq:

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“struct, you but I am afraid you will become  
 “bad Christians. Their promises were fair,  
 “I instructed them and when they had a toler-  
 “able knowledge I baptized them. Having  
 “baptized them I exhorted them to steal no  
 “more but to work industriously. After that  
 “I visited them and having examined their  
 “knowledge desired to see their work. I ob-  
 “served with pleasure their fields were excel-  
 “lently cultivated. Now, said I, one thing  
 “remains to be done. You must pay your  
 “tribute readily and not wait till it is exacted  
 “by military force; which is otherwise their  
 “custom. Soon after that I found they paid  
 “off their tribute exactly. The only complaint  
 “against those Christian Collaries was that they  
 “refused to go upon plundering expeditions as  
 “they had done before.” If any assertion of  
 this excellent man required a confirmation we  
 have it amply in the account (q) of the Pro-  
 testant missions in the East Indies for the year  
 1800. “The road between Trichanapaly  
 “and Tanjore had formerly been very unsafe,  
 “the inhabitants being chiefly Collaries or  
 “professed thieves; but since the late Mr.  
 “Swartz had been amongst them so often  
 “and had formed congregations in those parts,  
 “they had heard nothing of robberies.” An  
 opulent native of India, who had been pre-  
 sent on one occasion when this pious missionary  
 explained the Christian doctrine to Heathens  
 and Christians, said to him Sir, if you send a  
 person to us *send us one who has learned all*  
*your ten commandments* (r). We may judge of

(q) Account of the Protestant Missions to the East Indies  
 in 1800, p: 134.

(r) Account of the Protestant Missions, &c. in 1794, p.  
 221.

the happy effects of Christianity in India from the following extract of a letter (s) from a reputable gentleman in India to the Rev. Dr. Vincent in England. "With regard to the question which has been agitated in England on the expediency of sending missionaries to India (a question highly disgraceful to its opposers) it may suffice to know that the native Protestant converts are when compared with a like number of other natives the most orderly and respectable class in the country. Their number is very considerable, I should think about 3000. That they consist entirely of the lower cast is a vulgar error; and instead of being, as is often asserted, despised and contemptuously treated by their fellow natives, they are universally *respected*: by the latter term I would be understood to say that on account of their general good behaviour in society they are esteemed to possess more probity and better dispositions towards social kindness than any other natives." Such were the effects of the Danish and English missions in the East Indies. The preceding information on the effects of the London Society's Protestant missions in India I received from the accounts of those missions which were published in 1796, 1797, 1800 and 1801: the other annual accounts of their missions I have not seen. In London in 1795 was formed for the same purpose another society consisting, I believe, of pious Episcopalians, Calvinists and other Protestant Dissenters. At the first formation of

(s) Account of the Protestant Missions &c. for the year 1799, p. 148.

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this society they resolved to send missionaries to Otaheite, to the coast of Africa, to Surat, to Bengal and to the Pelew islands (1); to civilize the natives and to instruct them in religion, in morality and in useful arts. In 1796 they sent missionaries to the South Sea islands; and the persons appointed to this mission were four ordained ministers and about twenty-four mechanics and artisans, carpenters, sawyers, shoemakers, tailors, hatters, bricklayers &c. &c.; moral and orderly men, and as capable of catechizing savages as the most learned professor: men who could have no motive but pious zeal to combat dangerous seas, to undergo the trouble of learning barbarous languages and to risque their lives among idolaters and savages. From the published accounts (2) of this mission we learn the state of the Heathens in some of these islands, particularly at Otaheite. The natives of this island tho' kind, generous and hospitable to strangers perform cruel, immoral and dishonest acts without remorse, and as if they had little sense of shame or decency. They allow sacrifices of men and infants, cruelties at funerals, a plurality of wives, unnatural crimes, theft and other offences not tolerated in Christendom. They rarely offer human sacrifices, but murder infants without hesitation, especially such as are the fruit of adulterous intercourses. One of the natives having told a missionary that they seldom sacrifice except

(1) See the pious discourses of Heys, Burder, Hawes, Greathhead, Hill and Bogue preached before the Missionary Society in London in 1795.

(2) See Journals of the Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean performed in 1796, 1797, 1798.

when the gods were angry, the missionary asked him how he knew when they were angry: he said by speaking to us. The missionary asked him how this was done; he laughing said, on these occasions a priest wrapt himself in a bundle of cloth rolled up like a ball and spoke in a sharp, shrill, squeaking voice, I am angry, fetch me hogs, kill a man and my anger will be appeased (w). During the illness of a chief one of his sons caused a younger brother of his own to be strangled; imagining the strength of the son would be transferred to and recover the father: and at the funeral of a chief, women were strangled and men cut and mangled themselves as tokens of grief (x). A plurality of wives prevails in the South Sea islands; but is mostly confined to chiefs who are liberal in lending them. One of the missionaries having declined such an offer, the wife whom he rejected doubted his sex and was so indecent as to come at night to his bed to be satisfied of the point (y). A certain queen bathed every day at noon attended by twenty men, and seldom had a female to wait on her; and in some places were men called *mawboos* dressed like females who committed unnatural crimes without the smallest sense of shame or guilt (z). The South Sea islanders are thieves and do not consider dishonesty to be a vice. One of the missionaries having told the king that one of his subjects was a thief and had stole some planks of timber, the

(w) Journals p: 166.

(x) Ibid p: 234, 235, 236. 238.

(y) Ibid p: 140.

(z) Ibid p: 198.



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king said, no, it is the custom of Oraheite (a). We are not to rely implicitly on the reports of voyagers relative to the innocence of islanders: few staid among them long enough to know them thoroughly, and those few perhaps thought it ungenerous to expose a kind, hospitable and well disposed people. The happy effects of those missions on the condition of less innocent Pagans is thus forcibly anticipated in one of the discourses we referred to in the margin: "Beings who were accustomed to plunder and slaughter and who lived more like beasts than men are humanized, and their native ferocity yields to the influence of civilization——Where the savage war-hoop, the dismal howl that portended the onset of murdering tribes was heard, there the melody of Gospel songs resounds; and the sounds of rapine, of horror and bloodshed become as fields which the Lord has blessed. Where smoking altars stood overspread with human victims, even there do the peaceful temples of righteousness and love appear, in which not burning bodies but glowing souls ascend to God in the sweet incense of tributary praise." The Moravians or United Brethren also have exhibited a disinterested and persevering zeal in Greenland, in the West Indies, in America and in other places where Paganism prevailed. For the following account of the Moravian missions I am indebted to the Rev. John Hartley the pious and well informed minister of the Moravian Brethren in Dublin. According

1802.

(a) Journals p. 132, 157.

to this account the missionaries found all the Heathen nations with whom they have formed any acquaintance in much the same situation with regard to happiness. The Negroes were sensual and lascivious in the extreme, ignorant of God, of their proper destiny and of almost every moral obligation. The Greenlanders also had no idea of God, no laws or civil institutions and were quite in the state of nature. They lived constantly under the terrors of superstition, the tyranny of their forcerers, in dread of murderers and harrassed by apprehensions of an unknown state after death. They were besides so stupidly sensual that in a season of plenty they devoured the whole of their substance, and were afterwards exposed to all the horrors of famine. In advanced age if burdensome to their relations they had to dread being put alive into a sack, and thus to be drowned or buried.—The Indians possessed indeed more knowledge and some kind of civil and political constitution, but lived not less than the former under the terror of the murderous revenge of their enemies. Superstition and witchcraft unceasingly harrassed them: uncertainty on the state of futurity perplexed their minds: unceasing wars embittered their lives: in a time of peace, famine and dearth alternately changed with intemperance and gluttony, and miserably thinned their numbers so that some tribes were almost extirpated.—No better was the state of the Caribs, Arawacks and other Heathen nations to whom the Moravian Brethren have attempted to preach the Gospel.—The  
history

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history of their missions and the indubitable testimony of the most authentic witnesses prove satisfactorily, that the present state of these nations after they have received and become obedient to the Gospel is far preferable; not only with regard to the nobler end of their existence, but even as to domestic comfort and social enjoyments. And their conversion to Christianity is acknowledged to have had a salutary influence upon the public welfare and general security of the state. Of this Pontoppidan (*b*), Ramsay, the West India merchants in the report to the privy council on the slave trade, and others have given testimony.

1749. When bishop Johannes de Watteville was on a visitation of the Negro congregations in the Danish West India islands, the governor pointed to the church of the missionaries and remarked, that it was the principal fortress and considered by him as the great safeguard of the island. He added, that before it was built he had not ventured to sleep a night out of the fortress on his plantation: but now he had no fear. For if there even was a conspiracy among the slaves, the Christian Negroes were sure to hear of it and to discover it. That the condition of the Negroes is in general improved in these islands, and that in consequence of their good conduct they are more humanely treated is well known. Mr. Loretz relates (*c*), that when on a visitation there in 1784 he had the pleasure to hear the most satisfactory testimony of the Danish governor in favour

(*b*) Preface to Romer's Description of Guinea.

(*c*) See *Ratio Disciplinæ Unitatis Fratrum*, p. 331.

of the good behaviour and tried fidelity of the Christian Negroes. Greenland also affords a strong evidence of the improvement of the condition of it's formerly wretched and uncivilized inhabitants after receiving the Gospel. It has produced a very considerable amelioration of the external state of this very indigent people. Superstition and forcerers have almost entirely lost their influence and reputation. Murder is now seldom heard of. They have learned how to improve a time of plenty for providing for times of scarcity. The aged and infirm are no longer buried alive. More attention is paid to the preservation and education of their youth. Those of the North American Indians who have embraced Christianity have also visibly improved in their whole external and moral condition. Many are settled in neat villages, have begun to till the ground, are no longer wholly dependent on a precarious subsistence by hunting, refrain from warfare, intemperance and intoxication; and are so improved in civilization as to excite the surprise of every traveller who has passed thro' their towns. 'Till the year 1764, every European who had dared to sleep a night among the Esquimaux of Labrador had been murdered. In that year the Moravian Brethren ventured to go among this murderous nation, and to carry them the joyful message of salvation in Christ Jesus. They have now three mission settlements there and dwell among these savages in peace and safety. Several have received the Gospel; and the consequence of this intercourse

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intercourse is, that other Europeans can now approach and trade with them without danger.—The Hottentots have always been considered as proverbially filthy, brutish and savage and scarcely deserving to be classed among rational beings. By their attachment to spirituous liquors vended among them by the Dutch planters, they had almost universally entailed slavery upon themselves. For it was the custom to intoxicate them shortly before the harvest, and in that state to hire their services for a whole year for a mere trifle; and from this engagement they could not recede but were treated as slaves. Since the Moravian missionaries have preached the Gospel amongst them great numbers have been induced to abstain from intemperance, to value their liberty, to till their own grounds and rear their own cattle, to clothe themselves more decently, become less filthy; and many have even applied to simple trades and mechanical arts. A town of their's at Bavianskloof, containing about thirteen hundred Hottentot inhabitants, has excited the admiration of numerous visitors especially English officers during the late war, and extorted the confession from many that no state of mankind is too abject to be benefitted and improved by Christianity (d). Mr. Cowper (e) thus

(d) The above account of the Moravian missions is chiefly extracted from Loretz, assisted by some oral communications. —Further particulars may be found in Crantz's History of Greenland, History of the Brethren, Loskiel's History of the Mission among the North American Indians, and Periodical Accounts concerning the Brethren's Missions among the Heathen.

(e) On Hope.

expresses

esses the happy change wrought in Green-  
by the Moravian Brethren on the hearts  
their converts.

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at are they now? morality may spare  
grave concern, her kind suspicions: there  
wretch who once sang wildly, danc'd and  
laugh'd.

suck'd in dizzy madness with his draught  
wept a silent flood, revers'd his ways  
ber, meek, benevolent and prays,  
ds sparingly, communicates his store,  
sors the craft he boasted of before  
he that stole has learn'd to steal no more.

in the British West India islands the natives  
Africa are ignorant and savage in the  
lest degree, till the principles of religion  
the means of the missionaries are instilled  
their minds and influence their hearts.  
y are even so extremely silly as to throw  
the graves of their dead various presents  
their relatives in Africa, which they suppose  
dead will carry with them to their native  
try and deliver to their friends. Ac-  
cording to the printed account of the Rev.  
Coke, the friend of the late Rev. John  
Bey and the indefatigable superintendent  
the Methodist missions, above 13,000 of  
Negroes are already members of his  
ty and fulfil all the relative duties of life  
re judgment of their masters. The Eng-  
governors in some of those islands have  
rested their approbation of the conduct of  
missionaries; and Dr. Coke who visited  
e islands four times at his own expence is

CHAP. III. so fully satisfied of the extensive good which the missions have already produced, that he should have thought the most arduous labour of the longest life more than compensated by the measure of holiness, virtue and happiness which the missions have added, thro' the divine blessing, to the welfare and well being of mankind. The planters and other inhabitants of Antigua, St. Christopher, Nevis, Tortola, Grenada and St. Vincent are so conscious of the political as well as religious advantages resulting from the labours of the missionaries, that they fully support the work in those islands by voluntary contributions and subscriptions. On the continent of America the Methodist missions among the Heathen have been of a longer standing than in the West India islands. Near 16,000 on that continent have been brought thro' the grace of God to Christianity, holiness and virtue by the labours of the missionaries: these also are now supplied entirely by the benevolent and pious on that continent. I am a stranger to the particular effects of the Dutch, Baptist and other missions; as it did not occur to me to treat on those effects until a great part of this work was printed; at which time I could not wait for the necessary information. Nor would this information be very material to my argument; there being but little difference in the condition of various Pagan nations, in all of whom human nature is disfigured by idolatrous and cruel practices, by want of honesty, want of industry and want of civilization. I respect missionaries who labour for the temporal as well as spiritual benefit of their fellow-creatures; and think they deserve from every friend of the Gospel

spel, of morality and of civilization not tempt or obloquy but countenance and ouragement; tho' some of them should be cient in literature, extravagant in their no- is of even erroneous in some of their opi- ns.

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Some have imagined that human sacrifici- , the exposure of infants, the fights of liators and other detestable practices of ient and modern Pagans were abolished civilization and not by Christianity. t the falshood of this opinion will appear considering that bloody and obscene cus- as prevailed among the Egyptians, Car- ginians, Greeks and Romans who were many respects equal to us in literature l civilization, and performed several hide- rites long after they had arrived to the nacle of refinement. Christianity and ci- zation were as cause and effect, and the uests of the latter are to be attributed to former. As the Gospel softened and ilized barbarians; we may fairly ascribe it the happy effects of civilization. The ussians and Lithuanians having offered hu- n sacrifices and continued uncivilized 'till ir conversion in the 13th and 14th cen- ies, it is probable they would have done to this day were it not for Christianity: ce the Mingrelians, Circassians and other athens are more rude than Christian na- ns under the same circumstances of la- ade and soil. The Chinese and Japanese, ough polished nations and well acquainted th arts and manufactures, publicly com- tted crimes which would not be tolerated the rudest Christian kingdom. In China  
the

Those  
happy ef-  
fects not  
to be af-  
cribed to  
Civilizati-  
on.



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the poor sold their children and frequently put females to death with impunity (*f*); and in the streets of Pekin have been annually exposed above three thousand infants: of which many have been preserved by the Christian missionaries. When the Japanese had what they imagined a sufficient number of children they killed or exposed the overplus; and many of these also have been preserved by the missionaries who built houses for the reception of children thus doomed to perish (*g*). The bonzas or Japanese priests, by maintaining that the sick and needy are odious to the gods, prevented the rich from relieving them; while the missionaries contended that health and wealth are often a curse instead of a blessing to the possessor, and that the favourites of heaven are frequently afflicted in this world, but compensated in the next (*b*): it is to be lamented that such a religion has been suppressed in those empires! Upon the whole it appears that Christianity exploded several crimes of the civilized as well as barbarous Heathen, taught each of them virtues to which he was a stranger, is an excellent moral system, and must wherever it is established prevent relapses to Paganism and the numerous evils resulting from false systems of religion.

Present  
effects of  
Christianity.

It will doubtless be urged that Christianity might formerly have been useful; but that it has lost it's influence from the weakness of the religious principle or from other

(f) Puffendorf de jure nat: & gentium lib: ii cap: 2 sect: 9.  
(g) Bozius de Italix Statu p: 275.  
(h) Mosh: Hist: Eccl: cent: xvii,

causes.

causes. If the religious principle is weak, the blame is to be imputed to those who have laboured to weaken it and to destroy it's influence on the minds and actions of men. But thanks be to God the religious principle is not so feeble as the unbeliever would represent it, or as might be expected from his exertions to undermine it's foundation. We have touched on the happy effects which Christianity is producing in Pagan nations; nor can it be fruitless in kingdoms professing the Gospel. The author of this work cannot tell exactly how Christianity now operates in Christendom; but from it's effects in Ireland he supposes it still produces good fruits in other Christian nations. In England pious and good men have strenuously promoted Christian knowledge among the lower orders; and in Dublin is formed an association FOR DISCOURTEANANCING VICE AND PROMOTING THE PRACTICE OF RELIGION AND VIRTUE. The following resolution of the association expresses the motive which induced them to associate: "Resolved that the rapid progress which infidelity and immorality are making through the kingdom calls loudly on every individual both of the clergy and laity who has at heart the welfare of his country or the honour of God to exert all his powers to stem the baneful torrent. But as many may be disheartened, by considering the impotence of separate attempts to discountenance vice and promote the cause of religion and piety it appears to us desirable to associate for that laudable purpose." The association was formed in 1792 by two clergy-

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men and one layman; in less than two years it consisted of three hundred, and was soon encreased to five hundred; several of which were laymen of rank, talents and worth. The chief objects of the association since it's commencement were, the education of youth in religion and morality; the observance of the sabbath; the use of family prayer; encouraging honesty and fidelity in servants; the prevention of perjury; of lottery insurance and of immoral prints and publications; the reformation of the criminal poor &c. &c. They considered how to discourage dissipation in the higher classes of society; to promote honesty and industry; to discourage idleness and beggary; to enforce the existing laws against immorality; and how the really necessitous may most effectually be relieved. The religious and moral instruction of the rising generation by parents and schoolmasters were chief objects of the association. When but few in number and poor in their funds they applied to the society FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE for bibles and other religious and moral tracts; and distributed 1300 quarto bibles and above 3000 moral tracts among the lower orders in 1793. In 1795 they dispersed 5000 bibles, a great number of testaments and 100,000 moral tracts; and intended to furnish every person in the kingdom who could read with a bible or a testament. They appointed a committee to discover the defects of the old mode of education, to point out remedies for those defects and to devise means for securing the general adoption of those remedies. To excite among the children of the poor an emu-

emulation in Christian knowledge, they recommended the practice of regular catechism in the parochial schools of Dublin, and distributed premiums among the best answerers. In the year 1793, only 40 appeared at the general examination and but 11 premiums were adjudged: on the following year the number was encreased to 254 and 60 premiums were distributed. The emulation thus excited among the youth, and the publication of the names of the successful candidates and of their teachers could not fail to promote religious knowledge. The association provided for the education of the apprentices of chimney-sweepers and of the children of soldiers whose migrations generally compelled them to neglect their offspring. They also exerted themselves to rescue from poverty and vice children who had been criminal themselves, and the children of criminals who had been hanged or transported. They drew up a short explanation of the nature of an oath and a solemn form of administering it in courts of justice; and suggested the propriety of preaching on the criminality of perjury in assizes towns on the sabbath preceding the assizes. To check the baleful influence of lottery insurance, the association published simple and affecting tracts on the ruinous consequences of that practice, and exposed the false calculations employed to delude credulous adventurers. To encourage honesty and fidelity in servants, the association proposed a plan for raising a fund to render easy and comfortable honest, faithful and sober servants who should be disabled by age or sickness from earning their bread. They condemned those narratives of intrigues

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intrigues and seductions denominated tete a tetes, and those obscene prints and ballads which were sold in Dublin, and prevailed on printers and print-sellers to suppress such publications. A member (*a*) of the association collected with industry the names of the books which are usually read in the low schools of Ireland, and shewed that they tend to give a wrong bias to the mind and to inspire false notions of valour, of justice and of property. Some of those books are romances of the middle ages; books which fill the mind with ideas of chivalry and divert it from sober reflection and useful knowledge to extravagance and enterprize. Others are books of astrology or fortune-telling, interpretations of dreams, accounts of witches, fairies, ghosts or of charms and incantations as preservatives against diseases. Some of them describe the lives of vicious persons and the adventures of highwaymen rather with admiration than censure. Not a few of them are novels or love-books, academies of compliments, books of intrigue, or songs partly witty and partly obscene. Such are the books which mostly compose the library and form the mind of the Irish rustic or mechanic! The association have not been able to suppress such books; but have recommended moral tracts (*b*) which under the garb of fable represent the happy effects of honesty, industry and submission to the laws, and the destructive consequences of the contrary vices. These tracts are so entertaining and instructive that the vast numbers of them which have been dispersed must

(*a*) Rev: G: Graydon.

(*b*) Most of them written by Hannah Moore.

we improved the morals at least of all those whose habits were not formed. The Association published different forms of family prayer, annually prevailed on the lord mayor of Dublin to recommend the due observance of Good Friday in the metropolis, dispersed 5000 copies of an address on the observance of the sabbath, and suggested to the late Dr. Fowler arch-bishop of Dublin the propriety of directing his clergy on one and the same Sunday to address their respective congregations on this important subject. The arch-bishop readily complied with this as well as every other suggestion in support of religion and virtue. The Association suggested to some leading members in parliament the total prohibition of the sale of spirituous liquors on the sabbath day; nor was the suggestion disregarded by the government of Ireland—In a word the Association attended to every defect in public morals and to every source of public corruption which they had any opportunity of discovering or any power to reform (c); and can there be a doubt but with the blessing of God their exertions will be productive of happy effects.

(c) See the admirable Discourses preached before the Association by Dr. Graves, Dr. Burrowes, Bishop O'Berne, Dr. Keble, Dr. Millar and Mr. Dunn.

## C H A P. IV.

THE ORIGIN, PROGRESS AND EFFECTS OF  
MAHOMETANISM.

*An enquiry into the origin of Mahometanism  
useful and curious—Various circumstances  
which favoured Mahomet's designs—Means  
employed in propagating his religion—His  
character—Evil tendency of certain parts  
of the Koran—Good effects of other parts of  
it—Mahomet's paradise—The doctrines in  
which he was most indebted for his success  
—His death and the establishment of the Ca-  
liphat—Mahometanism assisted Calid in re-  
ducing Persia and other places—It assisted  
him in reducing Damascus—It assisted Obi-  
dab in reducing Hems, Jerusalem and other  
Places—All Syria, Egypt and part of Persia  
submit to the Saracens—Other places submit-  
ted to them—Other causes of the conquests  
of the Saracens—Christianity and Mabo-  
metanism compared in their tendency and ef-  
fects—The lives and doctrines of Christ and  
Mahomet compared—Difficulty of making  
apostates from Mahometanism—Despotism an  
effect of the conquests of the Saracens—Ign-  
rance an effect of Mahometanism—Revenge,  
illiberality and extortion effects of it—Ef-  
fects of the doctrine of predestination—Effects  
of Mahometan devotions on individuals and  
communities—Effects of Mahometanism  
prove the excellent tendency of Christianity.*

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**B**Y Mahometanism I mean that system of doctrines and rites which are enjoined by the Koran, and which distinguish it from the Hebrew and Christian revelations. As Mahomet was acquainted with the Law and the Gospel many of his doctrines are derived from these sources; while he adopted others which differ from them essentially, and had a considerable influence on the state of societies. Hence we may ascribe the chief advantages of the Koran to the Jewish and Christian institutions; and all the evils which resulted from Mahometanism to deviations from the Gospel. The prophet of Arabia has been indebted for his useful tenets chiefly to the Mosaic and Evangelical writings, and for his absurdities to the weakness of unassisted reason and to a compliance with the superstitions of his illiterate countrymen. It would not be difficult to point out the sources from which he derived, and the originals from which he transcribed most of the doctrines and rites he enjoins. Such a disquisition would prove beyond a doubt, that the Koran has not the smallest pretension to an original revelation; but is a medley of Jewish, Pagan, Christian and Arian tenets, blended with the trifling, absurd and contradictory notions of the prophet himself. Mahomet, to make as many proselytes as possible, held the unity of God which was allowed by all sects, adopted tenets maintained by each of them and indulged his followers with sensual gratifications. But to judge of the effects of Mahometanism, it will be necessary to consider its rise and progress, the doctrines it inculcates and the duties it enjoins.

Enquiry  
into the  
origin of  
Mahome-  
tanism  
useful and  
curious.



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Some of my readers may possibly desire to know the steps by which a people once despicable erected a formidable empire; the means by which a private man was enabled to raise himself to be a prince and a pontiff; and the several causes which concurred to favour him in these points. An enquiry into the doctrines and effects of the Mahometan code is extremely useful to the cause of true religion; as it displays the superior excellence of the Christian institution, whether we judge of those two systems from the lives of their respective authors, the doctrines they enjoin, or the effects they produced on the state of society. As truth never appears so amiable as when contrasted with error; men should be acquainted with false as well as true opinions. The doctrines of the Koran should be exhibited to the rational Christian, to render him enamoured of the Gospel; just as the Spartans used to expose drunken slaves to their youth, to attach them to sobriety and to create an abhorrence for so beastly a vice. By observing the erroneous opinions of men in all ages and nations we learn to tolerate those who are in error, and become grateful to God for the superior excellence of the religion we profess. Nor is an enquiry into the effects of Mahometanism less curious than it is useful; since they make a considerable figure in the annals of oriental history and exhibit scenes in which the welfare of nations and individuals was much concerned. We shall see in the course of this chapter that the Mahometan religion was "instrumental in subduing whole nations, altering ancient governments

“vernments and introducing a new face of  
“affairs into the world.” (a)

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Several circumstances concurred to assist Mahomet in reforming his countrymen and advancing his designs. When he began to preach, the religious state of Arabia was such as might have induced a good man to wish for a reformation, and encouraged a wise man to undertake it from a prospect of success. At that juncture the Arabs believed in one Supreme Being the Creator and Lord of the universe; but worshipped inferior deities and idols whose intercession they implored as mediators with God. They had a multitude of those idols the worship of which Mahomet totally abolished; while he retained some superstitious rites and opinions of his countrymen. Some of the tribes professed the religion of the Magi; others that of the Jews and Christians; some denied the resurrection of the body, some asserted it; while others believed the doctrine of transmigration. To prove the ignorance and superstition of others it may suffice to observe, that they left camels to perish at the graves of the deceased; that at the resurrection they might not go on foot which was considered disgraceful. Arabia abounded with heresies; on account perhaps of the liberty and independency of the tribes (b). The state of the eastern and western churches in Mahomet's time, also assisted him in accomplishing the reformation which he had concerted. The eastern was no longer endued with that union and purity

Various  
circum-  
stances  
which fa-  
voured  
Mahomet's  
designs.  
620.

(a) Ockley's History of the Saracens, preface.

(b) Sales Preliminary Discourse sect. i.

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of doctrine which distinguished the primitive Christians; and the western was divided into sects which hated and persecuted each other. At this period Mahomet appeared in the world; perhaps as a scourge to chastize the eastern churches which were then more fond of religious dissension than of that love and harmony enjoined by the Gospel. Men attached to controversy were indulged with a system that encouraged war; absolutely prohibited to dispute, and commanded to swallow the grossest absurdities without daring to murmur. Not only the state of religion was favourable to Mahomet, but the imbecility of the Romans and Persians who would readily have crushed him had they flourished as formerly (c). His successes against these powers which had once been formidable induced men to believe him assisted from heaven and made many converts. At his appearance the western empire was overrun by the Goths, and the eastern so reduced by the Huns on one side and by the Persians on the other that it was incapable of stemming the violence of a powerful invasion. The Greeks were degenerate and the Persians on the decline; on account of the intestine divisions which prevailed among this people. As those empires were weak and declining; so Arabia was in a strong and flourishing condition when Mahomet began the work of reformation. Many fled thither as to an asylum from the persecutions which raged in the Grecian empire; the Arabs were inured to hardships and frugality, and strangers to the luxuries of the Greeks and Romans.

(c) See ib:

The tribes were divided and independent on each other in religion and government; a circumstance absolutely necessary to the propagation of his religion. Had all the tribes been united under one government, he would soon have been obliged to yield to superior power and punished as a disturber of the public tranquillity: or had they all one established religion universally received, he must have thought it unsafe to attempt to subvert it.

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Many causes contributed to promote the plan devised by Mahomet. When young he was employed in Syria, Egypt and Palestine as a factor to a merchant, and had an opportunity of being acquainted with the religion and manners of different nations. After the death of this merchant Mahomet conducted mercantile affairs for the widow; and acquitted himself so much to her satisfaction that she put him in possession of her person and property. He then formed the project of reforming religion and purging it from the corruptions introduced into it by the Jews and Christians. For this purpose he retired to a cave after the example of the Persian reformer (*d*); assumed great gravity in his deportment; was diligent in his devotions and liberal in his charities that he might acquire a character of sanctity and virtue. To prepare men's minds for his intended reformation he employed a famous astrologer to report, that a mighty prophet should establish a new religion and make

Means employed in propagating his religion.

(*d*) Bruckeri *Philosophia Perfarum* lib: ii cap: 3.

great

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great changes in the condition of mankind (e). Mahomet began with making converts in his own family; and finding himself successful among these resolved to try what he could do by persuasion among persons of his acquaintance; and had the address to gain over some of the principal men of Mecca to his interest in the course of three years. Having been thus encouraged he no longer made his mission a secret; but proclaimed to every person that he was commissioned by God to admonish his near relations (f). For this purpose he fixed a day when many who were invited to hear his admonitions became profelytes to his opinions. He accommodated his discourses to the sentiments of his hearers: told the Arians that as the endeavours of other prophets proved ineffectual God sent him with a more ample commission than Moses or Christ; to establish an earthly kingdom for the propagation of religion and for the extirpation of those who refused to be converted. He did not deny that Moses and Christ were prophets; but maintained that as the Mosaic and Christian writings were corrupted by the Jews and Christians he came for the purpose of purging them from errors. He did not object to the truth of the Jewish and Christian revelations, but contended that they were defective; while he pretended his own was the final and complete declaration of God's will to mankind so that men were not to expect any other revelation. His opponents required him to prove his divine

(e) Bayle's Observations and his Life of Mahomet.

(f) Koran chap: lxxiv.

mission by some miracle similar to those sought by Moses and Christ. He refused to comply with this requisition, alleging as excuse that if he should work miracles his followers did not believe they must utterly destroyed. Sometimes he told them their ancestors despised the miracles of other prophets and he would work none; at other times that they who were ordered to believe should do so without miracles, according to the doctrine of predestination (*g*). To increase his followers he claimed liberty to all; so that multitudes of slaves and fugitives crowded to his standard. He promised salvation and a sensual paradise to those of his own sect however vicious and dissolute; but denounced damnation against infidels without regard to their sins. According to the prophet infidels shall be eternally damned; while Moslems though guilty of the most heinous offences shall be delivered when they shall have expiated them by their sufferings. No believer or idolater shall ever be released, nor any believer damned to eternity. Moslems shall be punished in hell according to their crimes; but delivered when purged of their sins by Abraham or some other prophet (*b*). His refusal to work miracles long created dissatisfaction among some of his adherents, a powerful party was formed against him at Mecca: where the magistrates dreading the troubles which usually ensued on innovations in religion declared themselves his enemies. He preached in

) Koran chap: xvii.

) Koran ch: ii.

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public and was heard with pleasure and  
tence, until he upbraided them and their  
fathers with idolatry and corruption: it  
indeed the Koreshites joined the magistrates  
in banishing him from the city. He retired  
to Medina with a few friends; but soon  
joined by a multitude to whom he  
proposed the scheme of propagating his  
religion by force of arms. In his first ex-  
pedition he could not boast of success; but  
in the second defeated with three hundred  
and nineteen men a caravan of one thousand  
Koreshites, obtained considerable booty  
for himself and his adherents, and lost but  
fourteen men whose names he enrolled in  
his catalogue of martyrs. This persecution  
advanced rather than obstructed the propa-  
gation of his religion; for had he not been  
obliged to take up arms in his own defence  
he might perhaps for ever have continued a  
private person in the capacity of a preacher.  
But having got at the head of a small ar-  
my; ambition probably prompted him to  
form schemes before unthought of. Before  
his flight to Medina the success of his reli-  
gion was owing to persuasion and not to  
compulsion. At first he declared himself  
only a prophet sent by God to admonish  
men, but without any authority to compel  
them to embrace his religion; and even  
pretended to bear with patience injuries  
which were offered him while he was un-  
able to resist (1). Having increased his fol-  
lowers he told them that God allowed them  
to defend themselves against their enemies;  
and as he gathered strength pretended to

(1) See Act. ix.

divine permission of attacking, for the purpose of abolishing idolatry and the corruptions of religion. When he came to Medina supported by an army, he told those who desired to see his miracles that God sent Moses and Christ to reform mankind by persuasion and miracles: that when these methods proved ineffectual he was commissioned by God to compel men by the sword to do his will (*k*). At first he preached and exhorted men to embrace his doctrines; but as soon as his party was encreased we find the preacher transformed into a warrior and offering death or conversion as the only alternative to the vanquished. He told his disciples that the Koran was an abstract of the great book in which the divine decrees were registered; that the angel Gabriel transcribed from thence faithfully verse by verse and chapter by chapter, and delivered them to him as it was necessary to promulge them. He did not publish his Koran together; for then numerous objections might have been raised against it which it would be impossible for him to answer. But by bringing it down by chapters he was prepared to refute objections made to preceding chapters, to extricate himself from embarrassments, to quiet discontents among his followers and to indulge or justify some criminal passions (*l*).

Writers have differed widely with respect to the character of Mahomet and to the motives which influenced him to a reformation

The character of Mahomet.

(*k*) Koran chap: ii, iii, iv.

(*l*) Bayle's Life of Mahomet.



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of religion. Some think him actuated by enthusiasm, others by ambition : Some have represented him as a monster destitute of abilities and of every virtue ; others consider him endowed with all the virtues. However, most authors have in one respect or other mistaken the character and motives of Mahomet. The laudable ambition of restoring religion to its purity and abrogating the superstitious rites and idolatrous practices of his countrymen, might possibly have been the first motive which influenced him to attempt a reformation. At first he could not have foreseen the successes which attended him, nor aspired to the power to which he afterwards arrived, nor expected to gratify any ambition but that of reforming his countrymen from ignorance and superstition. The Pagan Arabs were in a deplorable state before his time ; and he might have thought it a meritorious work to bring them from idolatry and corruption to the knowledge of the true God. Though guilty of many crimes he must have carefully concealed them and observed at least some exterior decorum in his actions. His reputation as a prophet must have been blasted by adultery, perjury, blasphemy and other offences ; had they been known to the world. He must have hid those crimes until he got at the head of an army and acquired the reputation of generosity, charity, bravery and other virtues which captivate mankind. The prophet of Arabia doubtless possessed splendid virtues, blended with many enormous crimes arising from his predominant passions of lust and ambition. The latter he at first directed to the laudable purposes of reforming his countrymen in religion and morals ; but afterwards

terwards to the destruction of mankind for the acquisition of power. He recommended virtues he did not practise; inveighed against vices he himself committed; and left convincing proofs that he was more actuated by a love of fame than by a sincere regard for religion or virtue. His ideas of fasting, almsgiving and other virtues he borrowed from the Gospels; though he but feebly imitates these great originals. Were he a teacher sent by God, he would if possible have furnished the world with a more perfect system of religion than the Christian; and improved on former systems instead of debasing them just as Christianity was an improvement of the law.

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A great part of the Koran was invented occasionally to solve some difficulty or to gratify his passions of lust or ambition. Having been defeated at Ohud he was ashamed and said, that God suffered it on account of the transgressions of some of his followers and to distinguish true from false believers. To silence the clamours of those who lost their friends in the engagement he invented the doctrine of fate, and maintained that all events have been irrevocably fixed from eternity; that God had accurately predetermined the good or bad fortune of every person, his faith or infidelity, his obedience or disobedience; that life cannot be protracted by any human means beyond the destined period; that a man must die somewhere at the appointed time; and that it is more desirable to die martyrs in the cause of God than at home in their beds. We shall presently see that in consequence of this doctrine the Mahometans

Evil tendency of certain parts of the Koran.

rushed

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rushed dauntless into the jaws of danger and of death, and "esteemed their bodies as dirt" and rubbish, to fill up the enemy's trenches "for their brethren to pass over" (*m*). Nor is it extraordinary that this doctrine produced this effect; since nothing renders men so regardless of life or induces them to fight so desperately as a persuasion that no caution could avert any evil which threatened them, or protract life a moment beyond the destined period (*n*). He prevailed on Zeid to put away his wife, married her himself and pretended that this crime was dispensed with from heaven. He published the 33d chapter of the Koran in vindication of himself; and introduces God approving of this marriage and rebuking him for abstaining from her so long, though he had his permission to marry her. In this instance he was guilty of adultery in marrying another man's wife, and of blasphemy in making God the author of his crime. To satisfy two of his jealous wives who caught him in the act of adultery with a servant, he swears against similar offences for the future; but commits this crime in violation of his oath, and publishes the 66th chapter of the Koran which permits the prophet to lie with a maid servant and allows Moslems to violate their oaths. He limited the number of wives and concubines of each person to four; but reserved to himself the privilege of marrying as many as he pleased (*o*). He obliged others who had two, three or four wives to treat them in the same manner; but retained the liberty

(*m*) Sir Paul Ricaut's *Maxims of Turkish Polity* book ii ch: 8.

(*n*) Koran ch: iii.

(*o*) Koran ch: iv & xxxiii.

of using his own wives according to his discretion. He prohibited his disciples to marry near relations; but in his 33d chapter introduces God exempting him from that prohibition, and allowing him to marry whomsoever he pleased without any regard to degrees of consanguinity. Having been repulsed at the siege of Mecca he made a league with the inhabitants; but next year violated the treaty by surprising that city; and to justify his perfidy allowed his followers to disregard promises or leagues made with infidels (*p*). In consequence of this doctrine and the example of the prophet, Sir Paul Ricaut mentions several instances of perfidy among the Turks who assume it as a maxim, that they should not keep faith with unbelievers where the breach contributes to the propagation of religion. The Koran permits polygamy and divorce, repeatedly enjoins pilgrimages to Mecca and promises paradise and pardon to those who perform them (*q*).

Having considered the character of Mahomet, the causes that contributed to his successes and some of the means which he employed in propagating his religion, let us take a view of the Koran, shew whence he derived many of its precepts and point out their effects on the welfare of society. Mahomet like most reformers accommodated his religion in some degree to the prejudices of his converts; and laboured to unite into one system their discordant opinions. He was no stranger to the Law and the Gospel, but selected

Good effects of certain parts of the Koran.

(*p*) Ricaut's Maxims book i ch: 22.

(*q*) Koran ch: ii, iii, xxii.

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from them several tenets which he blended with the popular traditions and superstitions of the Arabs. The Koran is a strange compound of heterogeneous opinions; containing excellent moral precepts and sublime descriptions of God interspersed with blasphemies, contradictions and ridiculous falsehoods. The author of the Koran, notwithstanding his crimes, was serviceable to his country in several instances; by restoring the worship of the true God, abolishing idolatry, forbidding his countrymen to steal, commit fornication, forge calumnies or kill children, and by prohibiting cards, dice and inebriating liquors. His knowledge of the Gospel assisted him in reforming the doctrines of this people. The Mahometan system contained many tenets of the Christian institution, and so far was productive of salutary effects and preferable to the monstrous idolatry which prevailed in Arabia. He prohibited the use of the three arrows which were employed in divination and which were deposited in the temple of Mecca with a blank on one and the following inscriptions on the two others; "my lord hath commanded; my lord hath forbidden." Before they engaged in marriage, undertook a journey or any momentous business they generally consulted those arrows. If the second was drawn, it was looked on as an assent of God; if the third, as a mark of disapprobation; if the blank was drawn, they mixed them up until a decisive answer was given by one of the others. The prophet abolished several other superstitious customs relative to camels, sheep and other animals which the Pagan Arabs exempted from labour in ho-

nour of their idols(*t*). This people refused to widows and orphans any share in the properties of their husbands or fathers; on pretence that they only should inherit who are able to fight(*u*). They considered the birth of a daughter as a misfortune and the death of one as a blessing; frequently buried daughters alive; and put even males to death to fulfil a vow that if they had a certain number of sons they would offer one of them in sacrifice(*w*). The Arabian reformer abrogated these and other barbarous practices which were common among the Arabs before his appearance in the world. Mahomet prohibited wine and other inebriating liquors of which some of his principal officers having drank to excess excited much riot and confusion in the camp. The prohibition was extremely necessary in sultry climates where the fumes of liquor inflame and render men frantic. He also forbade cards, dice and other games of chance; as the frequent occasion of quarrels and disturbances. The Gospel does not prohibit the use of wine nor any innocent amusement; but forbids its professors to drink to excess, or to covet other men's goods, which is the usual incentive to gaming and renders this vice destructive to mankind. According to the Mahometan creed(*x*) there is one God and Mahomet is his prophet; mens actions are registered, and at the resurrection and judgment they shall be summoned to give an account of their conduct and rewarded or punished according to their works.

(*t*) Koran, v. & vi.

(*u*) Ib: ch: iv.

(*w*) Sale, sect: v.

(*x*) Mahometanism explained by Mahomet Baradan.

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into a state of glory; while the excuses of others will not be admitted. Their actions are weighed in a balance, and they whose good works outweigh the bad enter into paradise; but if the bad preponderate they are cast into hell. If the scales are equally poised they are sent into an intermediate state, and excluded from the happiness enjoyed by the righteous. If a man slander his neighbour, some good action shall be taken out of the slanderer's balance and added to that of the person slandered; and if the slanderer has no good works, God will diminish the punishment of the person slandered and augment that of the slanderer. Hence if we injure our neighbour in fortune or reputation, such a subtraction shall be made from our good works or such an addition to our punishment as will fully manifest the divine justice. This was an useful doctrine but did not originate with the prophet; having been entertained long before his time by the ancient Persians (y). The Koran prohibits adultery, false witness, avarice, usury, oppression, lying, gaming, swine's flesh, wine, eating blood, whatever died of itself, was killed by a blow or by another beast. It requires a perjurer to feed and clothe ten poor of his religion, or to emancipate a Mahometan slave to atone for his crime (a); while the Christian institution gives no sanction to perjury and allows no profanation of the name of God. The Koran enjoins charity and good works but limits

(y) Hyde Hist: Religionis Veterum Persarum, cap. xix & xxxliii.

(a) Mahomet Baradan.

them to Mahometans ; while the Gospel extends works of loving kindness to all men of whatever religion. The Mahometan code threatens wilful murder with severe penalties in the next world, but allows it to be compounded for in this by paying a fine and redeeming a Moslem from captivity (*b*) ; while the Mosaic law which evidently suggested the idea accepted of no composition, but required the life of the deliberate murderer. We have recited those rites, precepts and prohibitions of the Koran ; to prove that many of them were borrowed from the Mosaic and evangelical writings, and that they which differ from the Scriptures are far inferior to them in justice and utility. This observation is of some importance ; as it evinces that the Mahometan code has no claim to divinity ; because then it would improve on and not fall short of those revelations which preceded it and which Mahomet himself allowed to have God for their author. Those parts of the Koran in which the prophet indulges his own fancy and in which alone he could justly pretend to inspiration are a rhapsody of lies, contradictions, blasphemies and ridiculous fables the recital of which must disgust the most ignorant professor of the Gospel (*c*). Where the Koran corresponds with the Gospels it tends to promote the welfare of individuals and of society ; where it differs from them it is false, trifling or contradictory or teaches maxims pernicious to states. It is admitted that Mahomet abolished several abominable customs prevalent in Arabia, and was beneficial to his

(*b*) See *Mod. Univ. Hist.* vol. 1. Folio.

(*c*) *Koran*, ch. iv.



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country as a reformer of abuses and idolatrous practices. Yet it is undeniable that his religion was in many instances absurd; and that some of its doctrines produced direful effects in all the nations which received it. These to which he was most indebted for his conquests were a sensual paradise, revenge and the doctrine of predestination; these were the chief instruments in the hands of him and his successors in disseminating his religion and extending their conquests.

Mahomet's  
paradise.

Some have imagined that Mahomet's idea of paradise was borrowed from the Jews (d); but it seems more probable he derived it from the Persians who believed in an earthly paradise with beautiful virgins, gardens and rivers into which none are admitted until their actions are weighed in a scale. If the bad actions preponderate they are cast into hell; if the good, they are admitted into paradise (e). This false prophet adapted his promises to the desires of men who lived in a sultry climate, and who were delighted with women, rivers, shady groves and delicious fruits. As the country was excessively hot and dry and the people lewd and licentious; he promised to indulge them with gardens where many rivers flow, where they shall repose themselves under the shadow of the trees of paradise, be clothed in the richest silks and adorned with bracelets of gold and precious stones. They shall, says this sensualist, enter into gardens where they shall repose on fine beds lined with crimson;

(d) Sale lect. iv.

(e) Hyde's Sadder.

have wives who shall not cast a look but upon them, and whom neither men nor angels may touch before them. "They shall resemble coral and rubies. There are in those gardens women with eyes exceedingly black, and bodies exceedingly white covered with vermillion" (*f*). There men shall be allowed to drink freely of wine which will not intoxicate; enjoy perpetual youth at whatever age they die, and be delighted with music surpassing any thing ever heard by mortals. In short paradise affords its inhabitants so many pleasures that man would sink under them; did not God give unto every person the strength of an hundred for the enjoyment of them. The favourites of God shall see his face morning and evening; a pleasure far exceeding all the pleasures of paradise (*g*): so that the happiness of the blessed in the next world; according to the Mahometan system, consists not merely in sensual delights but also in those which are spiritual and refined. But we may easily guess which of them was most likely to captivate a carnal people who apprehended beyond the grave the same wants which they experienced in this life, and who tied camels at the tombs of the deceased for their masters to ride on. Mahomet does not hint that those pleasures are to be understood figuratively, and all his orthodox followers hope to enjoy them literally; while others are too refined for such gross ideas and understand his descriptions in an allegorical sense. The epistles

(*f*) Koran ch: iv, xxxvi, xxxvii, xliii, lv, lxxvi.

(*g*) Sâle sect: iv.

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and gospels on the contrary convey no sensual nor impure idea, nor attempt any thing puerile or particular like Mahomet's paradise: the pleasures offered by these being *such as eye bath not seen nor ear heard nor bath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.*

Doctrines  
to which  
he was  
most in-  
debted for  
his suc-  
cess.

Mahomet repeatedly enjoined his followers to wage war against infidels, declared it meritorious to rob, murder and extirpate unbelievers, and promised a crown of martyrdom and immediate admittance into paradise to those slain in propagating the faith. He prohibited his disciples to dispute about the Koran *(b)* but enjoined them to fight for it *(i)*. When you meet with unbelievers, says he, cut off their heads, kill them, make them prisoners, and never cease to persecute them until they have laid down their arms and submitted to you *(k)*. O ye that are true believers be patient in adversity, fight for the faith, fear God and you shall be happy. O ye that believe in God esteem no man to be elected of God that is not of your religion. I will cover the offences of them that assemble to fight for the faith, I will open to them the gates of paradise wherein flow many rivers to recompense their good works. In consequence of these doctrines and the practice of the first publishers of the Koran, Mahometan divines call the sword the key of heaven and hell, and maintain that the least drop of blood spilled in the cause of God and

*(b)* Ch: iv.

*(k)* Ch: of Battles.

*(i)* ii.

religion is acceptable to him : whereas severe threats are denounced against those who desert, or refuse to engage in or contribute to the support of holy wars (*l*). The effects of those doctrines were sensibly felt in the battles of Bedar and Muta where the ambition of dying in the cause of God and his prophet, and the hope of admission into heaven inspired them with courage and rendered them irresistible (*m*). The Saracens buried in their own blood those who fought for religion; from a persuasion that all martyrs shall be raised on the day of judgment with blood upon their throats, and led directly to paradise without being called to an account (*n*). In consequence of this and other doctrines of the Koran, the Saracens endured the greatest hardships rather than surrender a fortification; and submitted to certain death not only without murmur but even with joy rather than religion should suffer (*o*). In the infancy of Mahometanism they who opposed the Koran if taken in battle were put to death without mercy; but when that religion was established beyond all danger of being subverted the Mahometans gave the vanquished their choice of three offers: to embrace the Koran and be entitled to all the privileges of Moslems; to pay tribute and profess their own religion provided it was not idolatrous nor immoral; or decide the quarrel by the sword. In this latter case if the Moslems prevailed, captive women and children were reduced

(*l*) Ch: iii & ix.

(*m*) Smyth's Manners of the Turks.

(*n*) Ockley's Hist:

(*o*) Smyth ibi.

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to absolute servitude; and men taken in battle were slain or disposed of at the pleasure of the prince (p). It would be tedious to enumerate the several battles fought by Mahomet, and the various means employed by him in establishing his religion, and obliging his countrymen to obey his authority. We have recited the doctrines which assisted him in defeating the Korishites, the most powerful of all the Arabian tribes; and shall only add, that in consequence of his victory over these, the Arabian tribes readily submitted to his authority in civil and ecclesiastical affairs. The different tribes before divided, now united their efforts to extend their conquests, and religion; nor can we be surprized at the successes of a fierce people united under such a general as Mahomet, when influenced by his doctrines and opposed by the enemies which his successors had to encounter.

Death of  
Mahomet  
and establishment  
of the Caliphate:

Mahomet, having found himself established in regal and pontifical power in Arabia, naturally meditated further conquests. In order to execute his designs he dispatched ambassadors to the neighbouring princes to invite them to embrace his religion; and was furnished with a pretext for commencing hostilities against those who should refuse to comply. This was the first step towards the extension of the empire of the Arabs, and the foundation of the conquests afterwards obtained by him and his successors. He died meditating further conquests;

(p) Sale sect. vi.

and

and bequeathed to his successors the Koran and its doctrines and also an example that they should follow his steps. He died a prince and a pontiff, the head in temporal and spiritual affairs with the title of caliph; a title transmitted to his successors who were kings and high priests for 300 years. When the empire was overturned by the Tartars, the caliphs lost both the name and authority; were stripped of all temporal jurisdiction and confined to the discharge of the sacred function only. In Turkey, Persia and the Mogul empire those ministers of religion are appointed by the respective princes, as interpreters of the laws and deposed by them at pleasure (q). In the Ottoman empire, the musti is a mere instrument in the hands of the emperor, obliged to ratify all his mandates, and regularly attends his retinue to confirm his edicts (r). The sultan encourages a veneration for the musti, pays him great external homage himself and pretends to consult him in all doubts and difficulties (s). When he has resolved to make war or peace, to put to death a bashaw or vizier, or meditates any other important business he asks his opinion. If the musti should disapprove of his most iniquitous orders he is deposed, degraded or put to death; and another is appointed who is more flexible and complying. The concurrence of the musti justifies the Soltan's conduct, and silences the discontents of the people who are persuaded that whatever he consents to

(q) Prideaux's Life of Mahomet.

(r) Smyth *ibid.*(s) Ricaut *ib.* book ii ch: 4.

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is approved by the Deity. Such is the final issue of the sacerdotal office established by Mahomet and by the caliphs who succeeded him! At its first institution, it was united with despotism, and when almost annihilated itself lent its feeble aid to support despotic power. We shall now briefly examine the means by which the caliphs were enabled to extend their conquests and religion after the death of the prophet, and the influence of his doctrine on the state of society.

Mahometanism assisted Calad in reducing Persia and other places.


After Mahomet's death the Arabs rebelled against his successor Abubeker, and refused to pay him the usual tribute of tithes and alms, and to perform other rites required by the prophet(e). The new caliph sent an able general named Calad to suppress this rebellion, and to his courage and conduct we are chiefly to attribute the conquest of Syria and the establishment of Mahometanism. He defeated the rebels in a set battle, obtained considerable plunder and reduced them to servitude. This general had an implacable aversion to the enemies of his religion, or to apostates from it; and refused to spare even those who expressed the strongest marks of renouncing their errors. The Greek emperor Heraclius and other princes, who paid little attention to the Saracens during their domestic quarrels, now experienced the force of their arms. When Abubeker had reduced the rebels and apostates to submission, he resolved to compel his neighbours to embrace his religion or pay tribute; in compliance with an injunction of

(e) Ockley.

the prophet who commanded his followers to fight until all men were converted (f). The caliph dispatched Caled with troops to Irak; and this zealous officer soon obliged the Persians to submit to the empire of the Saracens. Abubeker having assembled some of his friends was advised to invade Syria, and to acquaint his adherents in different parts of Arabia that he intended to send true believers into that country to rescue it from infidels. They who received intelligence of his intentions expressed great readiness of complying with his commands; and a considerable army was levied from the different provinces of Arabia to march into Syria. In this expedition the Arabs defeated the emperor Heraclius, and obtained valuable booty; and their successes prompted the inhabitants of Mecca who had hitherto stood neuter, cheerfully to take up arms in order to partake of the spoil. Amrou is dispatched at the head of troops to Palestine and Obidah into Syria; on pretence of compelling men to embrace Mahometanism. The latter of these generals, having been worsted by the Greek emperor, is recalled and Caled appointed in his room; a successful leader who took several important places in Syria and obliged the inhabitants to pay tribute. At the siege of Bosra Caled cried out, fight, fight, paradise, paradise. In consequence of this speech the Saracens fought like lions, took this wealthy town and reduced its inhabitants to the yoke; while the priests and monks ran about the streets, in vain calling upon that God whose laws they had violated and whose providence had de-

(f) Koran, viii, ix,



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It assisted  
him in re-  
ducing  
Damasus.

The emperor Heraclius sends Verdan with an army to relieve Damasus which was besieged by Caled; and this general dispatched Derar with a small force to make a diversion. Derar, notwithstanding the disparity of numbers, advanced against Verdan's troops on a principle of one of his soldiers and founded on experience, namely that it was common for Mussulmen to rout a great army with a handful of men. In the beginning of the engagement Derar was taken prisoner; and his troops would have fled had not Omeirah cried out with a loud voice, what! don't you know that whosoever turns his back upon his enemies offends God and his prophet? that the gates of Paradise shall be open to none but such as fight for religion? These words revived the spirits of the soldiers, and prevailed on them to rally and maintain their ground until succours arrived. Caled soon came to their assistance, entirely defeated the Grecians and returned immediately to the siege of Damasus. Heraclius dispatched Verdan a second time with seventy thousand men to raise the siege; which so alarmed Caled that he summoned all the great officers employed in different quarters to hasten to his assistance. When the two armies were in sight of each other Caled rode thro' the ranks and exhorted them, in the words of their prophet (h), to fight in earnest in the cause of religion, and to be sure not to turn their backs and be damned for their pains. The Greek gen-

(h) Koran, viii.

eral, though his army far surpassed that of the Saracens in number, wished to decline the combat; knowing that his soldiers would not fight so desperately as enthusiasts who were sure of martyrdom if slain in propagating their religion. His apprehensions were well founded. The Saracens entirely defeated the Christians, killed in one day fifty thousand of them and obtained plunder of inestimable value. When some hungry Arabs, particularly those of Mecca heard of the successes of their countrymen, they solicited permission to go into Syria; from a desire of sharing in the plunder and of exchanging the uncultivated deserts of Arabia Petrea for the delicacies of Damascus. The Saracens returned to the siege of this city elated with success and almost certain of victory; while the besieged deliberated whether they should surrender and pay tribute for the preservation of their lives. Thomas the emperor's son-in-law objected to this proposal; and inveighed against the Arabs as poor, naked and barefooted wretches far inferior to the Damascenes in number and discipline. He was told in answer that those men fought desperately under the greatest disadvantages, and believed steadfastly that "every man who is slain enters immediately into paradise and every man of the enemy into hell." Thomas however prevailed on the Damascenes to resist the Saracens and even forced them to retire a little; notwithstanding a speech of Calad previous to the engagement. This general exhorts his soldiers to persevere; since they shall rest after death: and adds, *that is* the best rest which never shall be succeeded by any labour. We find even a Mahometan woman

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woman whose husband was slain solicit death; fired by enthusiasm and by the cant of the generals. "Happy art thou," said she, "my dear; thou art gone to thy Lord who first joined us together and then parted us asunder; I will revenge thy death and endeavour to the utmost of my power to come to the place where thou art." Having spoken these words she neither wept nor wailed; but armed herself for the battle and fought desperately until she was slain. The inhabitants of Damascus pressed hard by the Saracens were ready to capitulate, when the city was betrayed to Caled who attacked them immediately; in order to anticipate a surrender and obtain booty for his soldiers. All the inhabitants of Damascus were obliged to quit the city, except such as consented to pay tribute. Abubeker died the day on which it was taken; and was succeeded by Omar to whom he bequeathed the caliphat (*i*).

It assisted  
Obidah  
in reduc-  
ing Hems,  
Jerusalem  
and other  
places.

Omar sent some of his generals to invade the Persian empire and to make conquests in Irak. This caliph took the command from Caled who was too violent and fierce, and conferred it on Obidah who was mild and gentle. Abdolla, surrounded by an host of Christians, exhorts his troops in words to this purpose: either we shall succeed and have all the plunder, or else die and so the next way to paradise. Having uttered these words he fell upon the Christians and made havock among them.

(i) Ockley.

The soldiers of Obidah sustained great damages at the siege of Balbec; from the engines which were planted on the walls of that city and from a sally of its inhabitants. This general told his chief officers that the slaughter of the soldiers was decreed by God and enjoined to his troops patience and perseverance; since God promised success to those who persevered, and the degree of martyrdom to those who were slain in the propagation of the faith. The Saracens having prevailed as usual seized on Herbis the governor of that city and brought him before Obidah. When the governor saw the condition to which he was reduced, and the smallness of the enemy's number, "he bit his fingers with rage and indignation." The Mahometan leader took advantage of this circumstance and acquainted Herbis, that the number of true believers always appears greater in the eyes of idolaters than it really is; that angels help them as they did Mahomet at the battle of Bedar; and that though they never saw those heavenly auxiliaries themselves it was sufficient for them that they were seen by their enemies (*k*).

Such was the influence of enthusiasm in the wars of the first caliphs that a Mahometan officer signalized himself in the battle of Hems; from a prospect of the joys of Mahomet's paradise. He thus expressed himself aloud: "methinks I see the black-eyed girls looking upon me, one of which if

Syria, Egypt and part of Persia submit to the Saracens.

(*k*) Koran ix.

" she

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“he should appear in the world all man-  
 “kind would die for love of her.” Having  
 spoken these words he charged his ene-  
 mies with violence and made havock wher-  
 ever he went; until he was killed by a ja-  
 velin from the hand of the governor. The  
 emperor Heraclius exerted all his strength  
 to conquer those enthusiasts; and appointed  
 Mahon general of such an army as never  
 appeared in Syria since the invasion of the  
 Saracens. The Greeks began the onset  
 with such valour and impetuosity that the  
 Mahometans turned their backs; but were  
 prevailed on to rally by women posted in  
 the rear who attacked them so warmly with  
 invectives and blows, that they chose to  
 face their enemies rather than endure them.  
 They were so hard pressed by the Greeks,  
 that they forgot the cant of their generals  
 who told them before the engagement, that  
 paradise was before them and hell fire be-  
 hind them; and even Obidah who used  
 these words was obliged to retreat. The  
 combatants were at length separated by the  
 night when Obidah told his soldiers, that  
 their enemies suffered the same pain that  
 they did, but had not the same reward to  
 expect for their labours (1). In the end  
 the Saracens were victorious; having killed  
 one hundred and fifty thousand Christians,  
 taken forty thousand prisoners and lost com-  
 paratively but few of their soldiers. After  
 this victory Obidah marched to the siege of  
 Jerusalem, and proposed the usual conditions  
 of fighting, paying tribute or embracing Ma-  
 hometanism. The inhabitants of that city

(1) Ockley.

having

ing, resolved on resistance, that general strengthened himself with a reinforcement of his troops, offered again the above terms. Sarcastically threatened those who should attack them with men who loved death more than the Christians did wine or hog's flesh. One of the Saracen generals, in their prayer before Jerusalem, used the words which the prophet put into the mouth of Moses to the children of Israel: "O people enter ye into the holy land which God hath decreed for you" (*m*). These words, which accorded with their present designs, were understood by the Saracens to relate to themselves as well as to the Israelites, and animated the soldiers to persevere in the siege. At the end of four months the besieged were to make no further resistance capitulated, and submitted to the payment of tribute and to other severe conditions; for the protection of their lives and fortunes and for liberty of conscience. The same year in which Jerusalem was taken, the Saracens defeated the Persians and obtained considerable booty; clothes adorned with gold and jewels, great sums of money and an armoury stored with all sorts of ammunition.

The next place they laid siege to was Aleppo, which they took by surprise after a siege of five months and marched immediately to Antioch the residence of the Greek Emperor. Heraclius was vanquished by the treachery of his own people; the metropolis of Syria surrendered to Qbidah, and that prince escaped privately to Constantinople.

Other places submitted to the Saracens in the caliphate of Omar.

) Koran v.

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with a few friends. In the mean time Calid was successful in another quarter; and several towns surrendered to him as far as the Euphrates. After the capitulation of Jerusalem Omar dispatched Amrou to conquer Egypt and propagate religion in that country; Constantine the emperor's son opposed his progress but was not successful. The Saracens displayed their accustomed valour and were as usual victorious. Such was the zeal of those enthusiasts that even a beardless youth had the rashness to fight one of Constantine's officers who was much more robust, and who killed not only him but one or two more. This stripling used to say that he was not influenced by the delicacies of Syria to go thither; but that he desired to fight in the service of God and that of his apostle. Before he engaged the Christian officer he took leave of his friends; and told them they should meet again and drink of the waters which belong to the apostle of God in paradise (*u*). Tripoli, Tyre, Cæsarea and all other places of Syria which had maintained an opposition surrendered at length to the Saracens; Amrou besieged Pharmah, Cairo and other parts of Egypt and took them by force, stratagem or the treachery of some of their inhabitants. After the surrender of Alexandria all Egypt submitted to the Mahometans; and each inhabitant compounded for his life, fortune and liberty of conscience for two ducats a year. During the caliphate of Omar he banished all the Jews and Christians from Arabia, and subdued Syria, Egypt and other territories of Africa with

a great part of Persia. At the death of Omar, Othman his successor turned his arms against Persia, entirely conquered that country and transferred it to the caliphs. We now see the origin of the great empire formed by the Saracens and enlarged by the authority and wealth of the caliphs; to whom the Koran (o) allocates a fifth of the spoils taken in war, together with a part of the tribute paid by the inhabitants of conquered towns and provinces. The caliphs were enabled by wealth, territory and authority thus acquired, by the cant of generals and enthusiasm of soldiers to extend their conquests still further; when backed by hardy, zealous and temperate troops. Such were the doctrines and means employed by Mahomet and the other caliphs in extending their conquests and propagating their religion! Such were the immediate effects of primitive Mahometanism on the lives of its professors and on the welfare of communities!

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The successes of Mahomet and his successors arose chiefly but not entirely from his doctrines: other causes contributed to promote the victories of the Saracens. The natural bravery of the Arabs, the imbecillity of the neighbouring nations, the perfidy of some Christians who betrayed the rest in the course of those wars, and the virtues of the first caliphs all contributed to the conquests of the Saracens. Mahomet was richly furnished with natural endowments and well fitted to impose a false religion on mankind; having been "beautiful in his person, of a subtle

Other causes of the conquests of the Saracens.

(o) Ch: viii.



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“ wit, agreeable behaviour, liberal to the  
 “ poor, courteous to all, valiant in fight”<sup>(p)</sup>.  
 According to the Mahometan religion prayer,  
 fasting and almsgiving were so pleasing to  
 God that Omar said, prayer carries us half  
 way to God, fasting brings us to the door of  
 his palace, and alms procures us admission.  
 The duty of fasting was deemed so momen-  
 tous that Mahomet used to say it was the  
 gate of religion, and that the odour of the  
 mouth of him that fasts is more grateful to  
 God than that of musk<sup>(q)</sup>. Abubeker Ma-  
 homet’s successor in the caliphat possessed  
 many virtues. He was chaste, temperate and  
 disinterested; and divided all the money in  
 the treasury every Friday according to men’s  
 merits. Omar distributed once a week not to  
 the meritorious but to the necessitous, and  
 maintained that his distribution was more  
 rational than that of Abubeker; since the  
 things of this world were intended for the re-  
 lief of men’s necessities, and not for the re-  
 ward of merit which properly belongs to an-  
 other world. But besides those causes which  
 contributed to the victories of the Saracens,  
 the Koran contains a prohibition which was  
 extremely useful in promoting their conquests.  
 Mahomet absolutely forbid the use of wine  
 to his followers; and to abstemiousness Sir  
 Paul Ricaut<sup>(r)</sup> ascribes a great part of the  
 successes of the caliphs. In times of primi-  
 tive Mahometanism they strictly abstained  
 from wine; and the conscientious will still not  
 drink, buy nor sell it nor even use money  
 made by the sale of that liquor. The Per-

<sup>(p)</sup> Said to his readers.<sup>(q)</sup> See Mod: Univ: Hist: vol: vi. folio.<sup>(r)</sup> Eock, iii. ch: ii.

fians and Turks in general drink freely ; and when reproached by the Christians with drinking wine contrary to the Koran, say it is with them as with some Christians whose religion forbids drunkenness, tho' they drink to excess and even glory in their debaucheries (s).

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Should we compare the doctrines of Mahomet and the means which he employed in propagating his religion, with those made use of by Christ and his apostles ; and the effects of primitive Mahometanism and primitive Christianity ; the contrast would furnish a strong proof of the superior excellence of the Christian code, and point out the baleful influence of that religion which was propagated by the sword and founded on imposture. I shall refer my readers to the learned and elegant discourses of a late writer (n) for a comparison of Christianity and Mahometanism, and make but few observations on a subject so ably discussed by that author. The Gospel was not published in times of ignorance nor to a barbarous people ; the sword was not the instrument by which it was promulgated. Christianity had not its rise in an obscure part of the earth inhabited by thieves destitute of learning, but in the Augustan age when science flourished. The doctrines of Christ were spiritual and refined ; while those of Mahomet were adapted to the fancies and appetites of a sensual and ignorant people. Mahometanism was propagated by violence ; while Christianity was disseminated by the homely discourses of a few simple and illite-

Christianity and Mahometanism compared in their tendency and effects.

(s) Sale, *Seft.* v.

(n) White's *Sermons*.

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rate men endued by God with miraculous gifts. The Koran was accommodated to the ruling passions of the Arabs; while the Gospel opposed the prejudices of men and enjoined actions most painful to the corruptions of our nature. Mahomet was not illiterate as he pretended; and even if he was, he could more easily have imposed any doctrines on the ignorant Arabs than the apostles could theirs on the learned and refined. The Mahometan religion led to conquest and glory; whereas the Christian promised nothing to its votaries except sufferings and tribulations. The Gentiles having hated the Jews were averse to Christianity which originated among that people; while the Jews disliked a religion that included all mankind and reduced them from their boasted superiority to the same level with Heathen nations. Bayle acknowledges that no force was employed in propagating the Gospel for three centuries; but affirms that it was disseminated by the sword from the third to the sixth century as the Koran was afterwards. Though I might perhaps justly question the assertion of the gainsayer I shall accede to it at present, and shew that he can deduce no conclusion from that concession which can in the smallest degree injure the credit of Christianity. The Gospel was propagated though not established long before princes took up the sword in its defence; and was not indebted for its propagation to those who established and supported it by their power. Its internal evidence and the miracles of its professors made multitudes of converts in many countries before the age of Constantine. Christianity was disseminated though not established when that emperor undertook

dertook its defence; no violence was employed for three hundred years in propagating it; whereas the Koran owed its progress and establishment from the very beginning entirely to the sword.

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If we compare the lives and doctrines of Christ and the prophet of Arabia the contrast will appear striking at first view. The former did not promise brutal pleasures in Elysium like Pagans and Mahometans, but pure and spiritual enjoyments such as could not enter into the heart of man to conceive. Christ prohibited not only immodest looks and obscene conversation but even impure thoughts; and recommended self-denial, temperance, charity, forgiveness and resignation not only by precept but by example. Christ was spotless and without sin; Mahomet though possessed of some shining qualities was a robber, perjurer, murderer, adulterer and fornicator. The former inculcated peace, patience and love; the latter, war, revenge and hatred: the former checked men's lusts by monogamy; the latter inflamed them by indulging his followers with a plurality of wives. Christ permitted the moderate use of all God's creatures; the other prohibited wine and swine's flesh. The former commanded men to search the scriptures; the other forbid the Koran to be translated into other languages or read by the people. The one propagated his religion by his own virtues and those of his followers; the other by tyranny and acts of violence: the disciples of one were innocent fishermen; while those of the other robbed and murdered on pretence of propagating the religion of the prophet. Humility and forgiveness were the characteristics

Lives and  
doctrines  
of Christ  
and Ma-  
homet  
compared.

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characteristics of Christ; while "the stem  
 " passions of pride and revenge were kin-  
 " dled in the bosom of the prophet of  
 " Arabia." The disciples of the former  
 were honest and humane; while the histo-  
 rian of the Roman empire (o) denominates  
 the followers of the latter "holy robbers  
 " who were eager to execute or to prevent  
 " the order of a massacre." The Gospel  
 was propagated by the miracles and virtues  
 of its first professors; while "the use of  
 " fraud and perfidy, of cruelty and injustice  
 " were often subservient to the propagation  
 " of Mahometanism." Tribulation was de-  
 nounced against and actually experienced by  
 early converts to Christianity; while that  
 writer affirms, that "the encreasing myriads  
 " who acknowledged Mahomet as their king  
 " and prophet had been compelled by his  
 " arms or allured by his prosperity (p)." Sherlock (q) proves that the Christian and  
 Mahometan are the only revelations which  
 pretend to be a rule of religion to all coun-  
 tries. This learned writer appeals to natu-  
 ral religion, calls upon her to determine  
 which of those two is most consonant to rea-  
 son and has God for its author, and proves  
 that the Christian alone has any just claim  
 to a divine revelation. His words are these:  
 "Go to your natural religion; lay before  
 " her Mahomet and his disciples arrayed in  
 " armour and in blood; riding in triumph  
 " over the spoils of thousands and tens of  
 " thousands who fell by his victorious sword.  
 " Shew her the cities which he set in flames,

(o) Gibbon chap. I.

(p) Ibid chap. II.

(q) Sermon LX.

the countries which he ravaged and destroyed and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirements; shew her the prophet's chamber, his concubines and wives; let her see his adultery, and hear him allege revelation and his divine commission to justify his lust and his oppression. When she is tired with this prospect, then shew her the blessed Jesus humble and meek, doing good to all the sons of men, patiently instructing both the ignorant and perverse. Let her see him in his most retired privacies; let her follow him to the mount and hear his devotions and supplications unto God. Carry her to his table to view his poor fare and hear his heavenly discourses; let her see him injured but not provoked; let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to his cross and let her view him in the agony of death and hear his last prayer for his persecutors, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do"! When natural religion has viewed both, ask Which is the prophet of God? But her answer we have already had when she saw part of this scene thro' the eyes of the centurion who attended at the cross: by him he spoke and said, Truly this was the Son of God."

We have the testimony of Kabizi Agem earned Turk who was educated with pre-  
ices against the Christian religion, that  
the

Difficulty  
of making  
apostates  
from Ma-  
hometan-  
ism.

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1527.

the precepts of the Gospel are preferable to those of the Koran. Having been called upon to abjure this opinion and threatened with death in case of a refusal; he maintained it with firmness and voluntarily endured death rather than renounce it. In consequence of his obstinacy as it was called, a terrifying edict was issued out that all who maintained similar doctrines should share the same fate (r). Here we are furnished with one reason of Bayle's (s) assertion, that there are fewer converts from Mahometanism to Christianity than from Christianity to Mahometanism. But several other causes have concurred to prevent converts from the Mahometan to the Christian religion, and to make profelytes from the Gospel to the Koran. Mahometans employ rewards and punishments for the purpose of making profelytes, and exempt from taxes converts from the Gospel. According to the Mahometan faith, the wicked after a certain time are released from the torments of hell; out of which according to Christianity there is no redemption. The Koran allows private revenge so pleasing to the corruptions of human nature; and its professors speak respectfully of Moses and Christ: so that Jews and Christians are easily converted. As Mahometanism was propagated by the sword and intended to derive its chief support from the ignorance of its votaries; the prophet prohibited the study of philosophy and made it capital to dispute about the Koran, to sell it to strangers, to translate (t) it,

(r) Mod: Univ: Hist: vol. V. folio, p. 264:

(s) Life of Mahomet.

(t) Rofs's Religions.

to attempt to convert a Mussul-  
Should Mahometans be allowed  
argue about the Koran it would be  
impossible to convert or refute them.  
phet himself declared, that of twelve  
sentences in the Koran only four  
are true; so that the clearest re-  
in a thousand instances cannot in-  
Mussulman to change his opinion;  
may possibly be some of the eight  
falsehoods (*w*). There is one rea-  
which renders it extremely dangerous to  
to alter or oppose the Mahometan  
in countries where it is professed:  
authority of the supreme magistrate is  
upon the Koran; the doctrines of  
ok are the basis of his throne; so  
y change in religion must disturb his  
nent and a religious innovator is con-  
as an enemy to the prince.

ing pointed out the influence of Ma-  
nism in the time of the first caliphs;  
examine its most remarkable effects du-  
continuance and establishment. The  
ve Mahometans naturally considered  
tories and extensive conquests of Ma-  
and his immediate successors as the  
effects of the doctrines of the Koran.  
ery man who consults reason or his-  
must be convinced that extent of em-  
yes not constitute the happiness of in-  
ils or communities; and sad experience  
onvince the subjects of the Grand Sig-  
hat while their ancestors were extend-

Despotism  
an effect  
of the  
conquests  
of the Sa-  
racens.

myth's Manners.  
late 1692. 3.

ing



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ing their conquests and disseminating their religion they were fabricating chains for their descendants and augmenting the authority of despotic tyrants. The territories acquired by the three first caliphs are to be ascribed in a great degree to Mahometanism, and the foundation of the extensive conquests afterwards obtained by those who succeeded them. Sir Paul Ricaut (\*) thus describes the extent of the Ottoman empire in his time: "all the delightful fields of Asia," says this writer, "the pleasant plains of Tempe and Thrace, all the plenty of Egypt and the fertility of the Nile, the luxury, the substance of Peloponnesus, Athens, Lemnos, Chios, and Mitylene, with other isles of the Egean sea; the spices of Arabia, the riches of a great part of Persia, all Armenia, the provinces of Galatia, Bithynia, Phrygia, Lycia, Pamphylia, Palestine, Celo-Syria and Phenicia; Colchis and a great part of Georgia; the tributary provinces of Moldavia, Valachia, Romania, Bulgaria and Servia, and the best part of Hungary; all the extent of this vast empire concur to satisfy the appetites of the Grand Signior." Such was the fruit and final issue of the system of religion which originated in Mahomet and his immediate successors! Servitude and violence were the natural effects of the government erected by him and by the caliphs who succeeded him. As the Ottoman empire was founded in time of war; its laws and polity were arbitrary and severe; agreeable to

(\*) Maxims, book i, chap. i.

the principles of military discipline. Warriors became sovereigns; and what was acquired by the sword naturally became the property of their generals or princes. The Grand Signior can dispose of lands, cattle, houses and of every thing in the empire except lands appropriated to sacred uses. He was styled God on earth, the shadow of God, brother of the sun and moon and the giver of all earthly crowns. It is a maxim among the Turks that the Grand Signior can never be deposed nor brought to an account for cruelty or oppression; while he destroys less than one thousand of his subjects without a cause in one day. Absolute power implies passive obedience; and great industry is employed to instil the most implicit submission into those who are designed for great offices in the state. To die by the hand or even command of the prince, when the blow is submitted to with entire resignation, is taught in the seraglio to be the highest pitch of martyrdom; and he who is so fortunate as to suffer in this manner is supposed to be immediately transported to paradise. In consequence of this system of education, subjects readily obey the commands of the emperor, anticipate his wishes or even kill themselves for his pleasure or entertainment. A grand vizier who was a favourite of the sultan and applauded as a fortunate minister confessed, there was not any thing wanting to complete his honours except dying by the hand of the Grand Signior (y). To support despotic power, the emperor employs none in high offices but persons educated

(y) Ricaut ch. iii, iv.

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in the principles of Mahometanism and of passive obedience: the children of Christian captives unconnected in the state whom he may raise without envy and destroy without danger. Despotism prevails in all places where Mahometanism is planted; and is every where accompanied with subjection and servitude! "Every free and gallant people whom it has involved in the progress of its power," says the ingenious and elegant White (x), "have abandoned their rights, the pride of independence and security of freedom as soon as they are enlisted under the banner of the prophet." Another writer (a) asserts, that in consequence of oppression and the doctrine of predestination Egypt is less populous and worse cultivated than formerly; that its inhabitants are reduced to a third of their former number, and that upwards of one third of the lands cultivated in ancient times is metamorphosed into deserts whose horrid aspect frights the traveller. In consequence of despotism in the Ottoman empire, the succession to property depends primarily on the will of the sultan: but still individuals can secure their lands to their descendants by annexing them to the church as the prophet commanded. Any man who wishes to transmit property safely to his male issue settles the reversion on some religious foundation during the life of that direct male issue, and annually pays a small quit rent until it is extinct; at which time the whole devolves to that foundation. The religious and po-

(x) Sermon IX.

(a) Savary's XLIIIId. Letter on Egypt.

al systems being blended together in the  
an; every subject who observes this law  
he prophet holds his possessions by the  
right that the sovereign does his throne:  
has any prince ever attempted to dis-  
els the man who complied with this

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but besides the mischiefs experienced by  
vanquished and the servitude entailed on  
a and their descendants, those conquests  
in one particular instance peculiarly  
ructive to the literary world. The ca-

Ignorance  
an effect  
of Maho-  
metanism.

Omar, by burning the famous Alexan-  
a library that great repository of eastern  
ition, robbed mankind in some measure  
he discoveries of the ancients, which  
ht have served posterity as materials of  
ature and rudiments of science. This  
oh maintained that if those books agreed  
the Koran they were useless; if they  
red from it they were pernicious and  
ht to be destroyed. In consequence of  
loss of books and of the despotism es-  
lished by the caliphs, Mahometans espe-  
ly the Turks are remarkably ignorant,  
ly improve their intellectual faculties, de-  
literature and value themselves on their  
rance of the arts and sciences, as ener-  
gizing the mind and rendering them less fit  
the occupation of arms. The Koran is  
olitical as well as a religious code; and  
omet, by forbidding his disciples to dis-  
about or question it, excluded all that  
ing which is necessary in other countries  
the acquisition of religious and political  
nowledge. By those restraints on informa-  
and genius this servile people have lost  
all

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- all desire of recovering knowledge, are become too indolent to exert their own talents and too proud and perverse to adopt or regard the discoveries of others; while in countries where the Christian religion is taught, we find its professors active, inquisitive and inventive, well acquainted with the arts and with the unalienable and immutable rights of mankind. Renaudot doubts the burning of the library at Alexandria; and the historian of the Roman empire absolutely denies the fact for the following reasons. The testimony of Abulpharagius, who relates that disaster and who wrote six hundred years after Omar, is overbalanced by the silence of Eutychius and Elmacin both Christians and natives of Egypt (*b*). But I cannot comprehend why Gibbon should oppose the silence of these men to the positive assertion of Abulpharagius who wrote an history that does honour to his memory (*c*), and who was more unexceptionable in his character and testimony than either of these annalists. The former of them when patriarch of Alexandria was hated by his people; and relates several things not to be found elsewhere together with many lying and fabulous wonders (*d*). Hence the historian of the Roman empire might easily have perceived, why an author accustomed to relate new and marvellous events was likely to be silent about the well-known fact of the burning of the library. Elmacin, having filled a post of distinction and

(*b*) Chap: li.(*c*) Bayle's Life of Abulpharagius.(*d*) A New and General Biographical Dictionary, Art. Eutychius:

trust under Mahometan princes, must reasonably have been attached to their religion and government. He calls the impostor himself Mahomet of glorious memory, emperor of the faithful, and his followers the orthodox: so that if not a Mahometan he must have been a time-serving Christian, and unlikely to relate a fact disgraceful to Omar one of the most renowned of the caliphs. "They" says Bayle (e) "who consider the measures Elmacin was obliged to keep in his high office will not think it strange that he speaks honourably of the caliphs; and never disrespectfully of the Mahometan religion." Another reason why Mr. Gibbon denies the burning of the library, is the inconsistency of such conduct with certain opinions of Mahometan casuists who allow the faithful to read profane authors, and do not suffer the books of Jews or Christians to be burned from a respect which they entertain for the name of God (f). But let me ask whether these opinions were entertained in the time of Omar? and whether it is not absurd to suppose this caliph to be acquainted with Mahometan casuistry which did not prevail until after his time? Even this historian admits, that some casuists were on other occasions extremely illiberal, and condemned some caliphs who were encouragers of learning. "Superstition," says he, "was alarmed at the introduction even of abstract sciences; and the more rigid doctors of the law condemned the rash and

(e) Life of Elmacin.

(f) Gibbon *ch: ibid.*

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"pernicious curiosity of Almamoon" (g). If such men had flourished in the time of Omar, we cannot doubt but they would encourage him to burn rather than restrain him from burning the library. Mr. Gibbon denies the bad effects which are supposed to have arisen from that event; since those classics have been spared which Quintilian enumerates and to which the suffrage of antiquity has adjudged the first place of genius and glory. "The contempt of the Greeks for barbaric science," says he, "would scarcely admit the Indian or Ethiopic books into the library of Alexandria; nor is it proved that philosophy has sustained any real loss from the exclusion of them" (h). But surely Quintilian does not pretend to enumerate all books of genius, judgment or information in the ancient world. He is silent about the works of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Indians and Phenicians from whom the Greeks borrowed; though with many of their writings they must have been little acquainted. Is it probable that the Greeks who were notorious plagiarists would exclude from their libraries the writings of barbarians from whom they derived knowledge while they affected to despise them? If these writings were admitted into the library and consumed by the flames, the loss of them to literature might be lamented but cannot be ascertained.

Revenge,  
liberality  
& extortion  
effects of  
it.

The Koran encourages revenge and expressly enjoins a retaliation of injuries. "We have ordained the talip," says Mahomet,

(g) Gibbon ch. liii.

(h) Ibid.

“a man for a man, an eye for an eye, a nose  
“for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for  
“a tooth, a wound for a wound.” In another  
passage he thus expresses the same idea  
in general terms, offend them that offend you  
in the same manner that they shall have of-  
fended you (*y*). In consequence of those  
precepts the Turks are vindictive beyond  
expression; parents remind their children of  
any injury they received and excite them to  
revenge: so that this people seldom forget or  
forgive any injury which has been offered to  
them. Here it is worthy of observation that  
Mahomet built his law of retaliation on a  
mistaken conception of the Mosaic code.  
The Hebrew lawgiver did not authorize in-  
dividuals to pull out the eye or tooth of those  
who injured them in these respects; but in-  
tended his law as a direction to judges in the  
punishment of offences: while some Jews and  
after them Mahomet and his followers con-  
sidered it as justifying individuals in avenging  
their own wrongs. The Koran has inspired  
its professors not only with a vindictive but  
an illiberal spirit; and the first idea impressed  
on the minds of its professors was an hatred  
of other sects (*m*). Not long after Mahomet,  
Christians were separated from their Mahom-  
etan fellow-subjects by a turban or girdle of  
a less honourable colour, and instead of hor-  
ses or mules were obliged to ride on asses  
in the attitude of women. We read of a  
Mussulman who could not divest himself of  
an illiberal spirit even in the act of recount-  
ing his own virtues? “These are all my

(*y*) Koran, ii. v.

(*m*) Volney's Travels to Syria and Egypt, ch: xxxv.



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“virtues,” says he, “and by the practice of these I doubt not of finding entrance into paradise where the faithful shall set their feet on the necks of the enemies of our holy law and enjoy all sorts of happiness” (a). In consequence of the precepts of the Koran and the practice of the first caliphs, the Turks consider all who refuse to adopt their religion as persons whom they may lawfully rob, murder or extirpate; nor could any thing preserve other sects from their enthusiastic fury except political considerations which in some degree abate their inveterate prejudices. In Mahometan countries subject to the sultan viceroys exercise all sorts of extortion on Christians; and never want evidences to justify them against their complaints. In Egypt the cadis are so partial in the distribution of justice that it is scarcely possible for a Christian to gain a suit against a Mahometan; and the oaths of two Christians are reckoned but as one. If a Turk kill a Christian he is only fined; while a Christian can not even strike a Mussulman without risking his life (b).

Bad effects of the doctrine of Predestination.

There is one doctrine of the Koran which has been particularly destructive in those countries where it is professed. The prophet has told his followers that God has numbered their days and predestinated their fate; that every human event is irrevocably fixed, and not only the time but the manner and circumstances of man's death so unalterably settled, that the devout Mussulman thinks it

(a) Turkish Spy.

(b) Volney.

criminal

criminal to attempt to alter what was pre-ordained by God. In consequence of this maxim, the Mahometans judge all precaution for saving life both impious and vain; nor have they until lately been prevailed on in Constantinople and in other parts of the Ottoman empire to employ any remedy against the plague which makes dreadful havoc in those countries. They use medicines not for the purpose of protracting life but of allaying pain; consider the plague as the dart of the Almighty who infallibly hits his mark, and think it sinful to attempt to escape it by changing infected for salubrious air. The Egyptians will even wear the apparel of the infected without the smallest apprehensions; and as familiarly attend the beds and frequent the company of the pestilential as we associate with persons who are gouty or rheumatic. Sir Paul Ricaut (*c*) affirms that Constantinople would be depopulated by war and pestilence, if that city was not supplied with slaves annually imported thither from the Black Sea and by incursions into Poland. The plague at Constantinople is preserved and propagated by dealers in old clothes who sell even the furs of those who have died of that disease (*d*). The plague does mischief also in Cairo every year; and would be more fatal there if its violence had not been allayed by cooling breezes which blow regularly from the north in that city at the summer solstice. Though experience tells predestinarians that Christians who fly from infection survive,

(*c*) Maxims book i chap: 14 & book ii ch: 8.

(*d*) De Tott's Memoirs part i.

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while whole cities of them are depopulated; yet so firmly fixed is the opinion of fate that they will not quit the apartments of the sick, where especially in the families of the opulent many servants, the healthy and diseased lie promiscuously in the same room and often perish together. In some places men are forbidden to abandon the city or their houses, or to shun the conversation of infectious persons where business invites them; but advised to avoid contagious places where they have no business to transact. Many men of sense shun the plague and retire from infectious to wholesome air; not confiding in the prophet's maxim contrary to experience (*e*). Savary maintains that the plague is not a native of Egypt, but is imported thither by the infected goods of Turkish merchants; and that a disease which did little mischief in ancient Lacedemon, Athens and Byzantium would be equally harmless in those countries in modern times, were it not for the doctrine of fate and the disregard of Mahometan governments to the health of their subjects. In consequence of these two causes, this malady sometimes sweeps away at Cairo three hundred thousand souls; and has lately destroyed two hundred thousand at Moscow, having been propagated by pestiferous merchandize from the warehouses of the Jews (*f*). In Egypt the bashaws or deputy governors derive great emolument from the doctrine of predestination and from the evils which attend it.

(*e*) Ricaut ii, 8.

(*f*) Savary Letter xlii.

Besides paying the Grand Signior an exorbitant rent, these men are obliged to support the temple of Mecca, to maintain a certain number of troops and to supply him with slaves of which there are multitudes in Africa. As the office of bashaw generally lasts but one year, he exercises every kind of extortion both to pay the sultan his rent and to enrich himself in that time; but derives his principal emolument from the plague which annually sweeps away thousands. Every person being only tenant for life, and life itself precarious; when he dies his property reverts to the emperor or his viceroy who sells it immediately, and has sometimes sold the same estate to three or four persons in the course of one week (g). The doctrine of unalterable fate creates an indifference for all things and renders it's professors inactive to an extraordinary degree. Men who are persuaded that every thing is predetermined by God naturally indulge in ease; thinking it vain nay impious to interpose. As this doctrine destroys free agency; it renders reason useless, discourages industry and prevents men from exercising their talents to obstruct or remedy evils which may threaten or befall them. The disciple of Mahomet beholds with stupid indifference his parents, children and friends languish or expire; and his country desolated by pestilence, without exerting a single effort to check its baleful influence or to mitigate its rage. He feels none of the pious resignation of a good Christian under his sufferings; and receives benefits from God without expressing or feeling any emo-

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IV.

tion of gratitude. A Turk, who narrowly escapes destruction from the fall of an house, instead of returning thanks for his deliverance from impending ruin cries out, that the hour is not yet come which God has pre-ordained for his departure from this life (b).

Effects of  
Mahomet-  
an devo-  
tions on in-  
dividuals  
and com-  
munities.

Let us consider the effects of Mahometan devotions on the state of individuals and the welfare of society in Turkish countries. The prophet acquainted his followers that God sent the Koran to the lowest heaven in the month of Ramadan; and that the angel Gabriel brought it down from thence and delivered it to him chapter by chapter. In commemoration of this extraordinary event Mahomet ordered a fast on this month; which bears some resemblance to our lent but is more rigorously observed. The Mahometan fast consists in abstinence from meat, drink and lying with their wives; and requires a constant attendance in places of worship from sun rise to the end of the evening twilight. Mussulmen reckon this month holy, and believe that as long as it lasts the gates of paradise are open and those of hell shut. None are excused from fasting on this month unless they are sick or on a journey; in which case this fast is observed on another month. So great a veneration have the Mahometans for their prophet, that every person, animal or thing which has any relation to him are treated with the highest respect. Priests kiss the Koran and bow to it, Mussulmen reverence the beast which carried it and even the handkerchief that wiped off the sweat; nor is any

(A) Smyth's Manners.

son allowed to touch the Koran without shed hands and a clean napkin. The Mahometans venerate every piece of paper; because as some have imagined the Koran is written on that substance; while others account for their veneration in a different manner. The Turks respect every piece of paper which comes in their way; as the name of God might be written upon it, and thrust it into some place where it cannot be trampled.

They imagine that when Mahomet shall ascend with his followers to heaven on the day of judgment, they must in their way thither walk over grates of hot iron barefooted; and that these pieces of paper which they saved from being trodden upon shall then be put under their feet; to preserve them from the torture of the red hot bars (*k*). The descendants of the Arabian prophet are exempted from legal prosecutions in courts of law; and in Cairo his shirt is preserved and carried in procession on certain days with great pomp and ceremony. Every person is required to visit his tomb at Mecca at least once in his life, except under particular circumstances. They who have performed this pilgrimage are confident they are absolved from all sin, and sure of being rewarded with the joys of paradise. Some pilgrims on their return from the tomb resolve on silence for three or four years; while others put out their eyes, as if every thing else was beneath their regard after a sight so divine (*l*). The Grand Signior draws great part of his revenues from the tribute paid by pilgrims going

1) Busbequ: de moribus Turcarum epist: i p: 50.

2) Bayle's Life of Mahomet.

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to Mecca; and as a mark of veneration for the prophet annually sends into Arabia 500 sequins, a Koran covered with gold, and as much black stuff as serves for a tent in the mosque at Mecca (*m*). When the new tent is erected pilgrims tear the old to pieces; and each of them carries home a rag which is considered as a precious relic having been so long near to the bones of the prophet (*n*). The Koran requires this pilgrimage from all who are in a condition to make it; and declares that they who decline it might as well die Jews or Christians as in the Mahometan religion. In consequence of this command the pilgrimage to Mecca is reckoned so essential a branch of practical religion, that "the Mussulman must leave his friends, family and country, and expose himself to the perils of a long journey through barren sands and beneath a burning sky, to visit the temple of Mecca and the tomb of their prophet" (*p*). Such multitudes annually assemble at Mecca from different Mahometan countries in honour of him, that it is become a place of traffic to which men carry the merchandize of their own country and return home with the richest goods of Persia and the East Indies. Devotion has established a fair at Mecca; and caravans of forty thousand merchants and devotees set out once a year from Cairo, Damascus and other places so as to meet on the way, and travel together unmolested to that city. Without such associations, no commerce could be carried on between countries so distant; nor

(*m*) See *Mod. Univ. Hist.* vol. i & vi folio.

(*n*) *Smyth's Manners.*

(*p*) *Whyte's Sermons*, IXth.

could

could individuals nor even small bodies of men safely travel thro' barren deserts, where they were liable to be infested by the Arabs or destroyed by wild beasts (q).

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From what has been delivered in this section, we may judge of the influence of the Mahometan institution in those countries in which it is professed. We have pointed out its principal bad effects and may reduce them to the following heads; namely a spirit of revenge, hatred of other sects, the despotism of rulers, the ignorance and servitude of subjects, the depopulation of countries by war and pestilence, and the inconveniences to individuals and the public from pilgrimages to Mecca. These evils are the natural offspring of the doctrines and practices of the preachers and professors of Mahometanism, and furnish a strong argument of the excellence of the Christian code by the observance of whose precepts all those evils would vanish or disappear. If we may judge of the truth and divinity of a religious system from the tendency and real effects of its doctrines, we must conclude that Mahometanism could not have been inspired by a good and wise God, who never dictates what upon the whole is hostile to the temporal happiness of his creatures. We should not allow those doctrines to be of divine origin which tend to the destruction of mankind; while they pretend to advance men's eternal welfare. Having pointed out the happy effects of Christianity in numerous instances, we may, if we compare these effects with the evils that have arisen from Mahome-

Effects of  
Mahomet-  
anism  
prove the  
excellent  
tendency  
of Chris-  
tianity.

(q) Mod: Un: Hist: vol: vi folio, book xxi chap: 3.

tanism,



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tanism, form a general opinion of the truth or falsehood of those different systems of religion. Yet Mr. Gibbon approves the popular creed of the Mahometans: "there is but one God, "and Mahomet is his prophet;" and thinks it so rational that a philosophic Theist might be induced to subscribe it (*r*). I admit that a philosophic Theist would not hesitate to subscribe the former part of this creed relative to the unity of God; but surely a philosopher could not readily be convinced that Mahomet was a prophet commissioned by that God. This philosophic historian and Theist intimates that Mahomet was indebted for his Koran to his own researches and not to the assistance of Jews or Christians; since "the uniformity of a work denotes the hand of a single artist" (*s*). Admitting the truth of this proposition it necessarily follows, that the Koran which is a compound of heterogeneous materials, of truth and falsehood, of low and sublime ideas was not the work of one man. This writer who attributes uniformity to Mahometanism admits, that in a version of the Koran "the European infidel will peruse with impatience the endless incoherent rhapsody of fable, and precept and declamation which seldom excites a sentiment or an idea; which sometimes crawls in the dust and is sometimes lost in the clouds" (*t*). Let me ask how the historian can reconcile this incoherent rhapsody of fable, and precept and declamation, &c. with the uniformity which he ascribed to the Mahometan system a few pages before?

(*r*) Hist. ch: 1.(*s*) Ibid.(*t*) Ibid.

C H A P. V.

AN EXAMINATION OF A FEW POINTS RELATIVE TO THE TENDENCY AND EFFECTS OF THE HEATHEN, JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.

*The laws of Moses preferable to those of Heathen lawgivers—Mosaic account of the Creation tends to remove some errors of naturalists—Hebrew writings useful in chronology and history—Evil tendency of Heathenism not counteracted by it's priests—The laws of Christians more humane than those of Heathens.*

THO' the political systems of the Heathen lawgivers were in general wise and just, yet were they inferior to that of Moses in many particulars. The Mosaic law forbids men to engage in war but for self-defence or to obtain satisfaction for injuries, to invade an enemy's country until restitution was refused, to cut down fruit trees or to commit unnecessary waste or havock of any kind; whereas we cannot find any thing of this kind in all the codes of the Heathen lawgivers. We also find in the Mosaic code many pressing exhortations to relieve the poor, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow; which cannot be equalled in the laws of other ancient kingdoms. *Thou shalt not harden thine heart nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother—thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to the poor and to the needy in the land—When ye reap the harvest, thou shalt*

*The laws of Moses preferable to those of Pagan lawgivers.*

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*thou shalt not wholly reap the corner of thy field nor gather the gleanings of thy harvest; thou shalt leave them to the poor and to the stranger.* The unbeliever cannot point out any humane law like these in the codes of Solon, Lycurgus or other lawgivers of antiquity. Incestuous marriages were common in Egypt, Persia, Arabia and even in Greece; but prohibited by Moses as contrary to nature and sound policy, and the source of numberless irregularities in private families. Some ancient nations had asylas for the shelter of criminals; and Moses appointed cities for involuntary manslaughterers to fly to for refuge. The latter were intended as a protection to the innocent only; while the asylas of the Greeks and Romans equally protected the innocent and guilty (*a*). In the Hebrew republic a woman who killed her child or a father who exposed his new-born infant would have been treated as murderers; while among the Greeks and Romans their laws allowed them to expose infants or put them to death. Romulus required every citizen to preserve all his males and his eldest female; and permitted him to destroy his other females and to expose weak or deformed children (*b*). According to the old Roman laws fathers might sell their children for slaves thrice and had a power of life and death over them as long as they lived; which privilege was not allowed by the Hebrew lawgiver. The old Roman law allowed a husband to repudiate his wife for taking his keys, or to put her to death for adultery; but allowed

| (*a*) See Lewis Hebrew Antiq: book ii chap: 13.

| (*b*) Dion: Hall: lib. ii p: 85, Edit: Oxon: 1714.

the woman no redress for the infidelity of her husband: while the Jewish law made no distinction between the crime of adultery in the husband and wife. The Jewish code enjoins humanity even towards beasts, and forbids killing the young one under the eye of the dam or the pursued animal which took refuge in their house: which instance of tender feeling is not to be paralleled in the annals of the Heathens. The Jewish lawgiver was preferable to the Spartan in the distribution of land; having confirmed his division by the laws of religion. By the Mosaic institution Jehovah was the Lord of the land and the Israelites were his vassals; and the lands held as fiefs from him remained unalienable in the same families on condition of obedience. The Jewish code guarded the persons of slaves from the tyranny of their masters, and the state from the bad effects of cruelty and oppression. If a master put out the eye or broke the tooth of his slave he was obliged to emancipate him; and if he struck him with a stick so that he died of the blow, he was punished or put to death. In Lacedemon on the contrary, even the innocent annually received a certain number of stripes as a mark of subjection; and the Helots were murdered to prevent their encrease. The institutions of Lycurgus were framed for a military government and tended rather to render men hardy and brave than just or benevolent. Aristotle (c) observed that the Lacedemonians flourished in time of war, but declined in seasons of peace; as may naturally be expected from the ordinances of that lawgiver. Plato and

(c) Polit: ii, 7.

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Aristotle did not indeed found real commonwealths like Lycurgus and Solon; but each of them formed one in imagination and committed it to writing. But while these speculators laboured to shew the strength of their genius and the perfection of human policy, they proved the weakness and imperfection of both. Plato (*f*) ordained that there should be a community of wives among the citizens of his republic; according to which plan incest must often be committed and the virtues of chastity and fidelity as well as parental, filial and conjugal affection could exist but in idea. Plato (*g*) commanded women to procure abortion and to expose their children in certain cases; and ordained that girls should dance, ride, wrestle and perform all exercises naked among naked young men: an ordinance which tended to kindle lust in the males and to deprive females of that modesty which is the best guardian of the chastity of women. Aristotle, who undertook to censure Plato and other lawgivers, was also defective in his own laws for the reformation of manners and for promoting the good of the commonwealth. When a man had as many children as he could conveniently maintain, Aristotle (*h*) ordered his wife to procure an abortion, and parents to expose weak or deformed children. These laws tended to harden the heart and to render men cruel and inhuman; since it could not be expected that he should spare other men's children who spared not his own. Aristotle (*i*) prohibited lascivious pictures, left

(*f*) De Rep: lib: v p: 665, Edit: Frankf: 1692.

(*g*) Ib: p: 652, 657, 653.

(*h*) Polit: vii, 16 p: 447 Edit: Paris 1619.

(*i*) Ib: p: 443.

young persons should be corrupted by the sight of them; but permitted the images of certain Gods to whom, as he observed, custom allowed licentiousness. How absurd to remove other wanton representations while he allowed those of the gods which corrupt much more? it was by a lascivious figure of Jupiter that Terence's (k) Cherea was prompted to a rape. The Mosaic feasts also were preferable to those of the Heathens. The former were but few in number and never protracted through an immoderate length of time; while the Heathens devoted a great part of every year to the celebration of their's. The former commemorated signal benefits; whereas those of the Pagans were celebrated on frivolous and often on ridiculous occasions. The former were dedicated to exercises of piety as well as to mirth; while the Gentile feasts were frequently destined to purposes of cruelty or debauchery.

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We may judge of the excellence of the Mosaic system from the inconveniences which have resulted from ignorance, disbelief or neglect of it. The Hebrew lawgiver affirms that God created the earth, sea, birds, beasts and fishes for the convenience of mankind: had naturalists embraced this account and exercised their talents in discovering the laws which prevail in the system, instead of creating worlds out of their own imaginations, their time might have been usefully employed; whereas by deviating from this account we find nothing but errors and absurdities among poets and philosophers. Aristotle,

Mosaic account of the Creation tends to remove some errors of naturalists.

(k) Enanck.

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Epicurus, Gassendus, Des Cartes and other materialists ascribe every thing to matter and motion, and see no necessity for the divine interposition in the fabric of the universe; whereas if they had followed the Mosaic account they might have been more successful in their theories, and have seen in the contemplation of the world manifold instances of the power, wisdom and goodness of God (1). Those who wish to be acquainted with the fictions of philosophers, concerning the structure of the heavens and the earth, I refer to a learned writer (m) who exhibits their different whims relative to the chaos and primitive matter. Moses on the contrary does not suppose a world made without a God, nor material beings transformed into spiritual by their own power, nor beings to exist which never existed, such as fauns, nymphs &c.: his scheme though grand and majestic is yet simple, not contrary to reason or experience, and unlike the absurd and confused accounts of the cosmogonies of the Pagans (n). Newton, by agreeing with the inspired writer concerning the production of the several elements and the motion and organization of the whole, has devised a theory which will last for ever; while the systems of fantastic writers are forgotten or disregarded. This prince of philosophers, by adopting the Mosaic account, has investigated the laws which prevail in our system, and proved them the best that could possibly have been contrived: thus exerting his

(1) See Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Creation*—Galen's *Ufu Part*—Derham's *Physico-Theology*—and Boyle on *Final Causes*.

(m) Le Pluche's *Hist. of Heavens*, book II.

(n) Winder's *Hist. of Knowledge*, vol. II. chap. viii.

abilities to the glory of God and good of man, and not employing them against his Creator like some ancient and modern unbelievers.

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The Hebrew writings were useful not only in preventing idolatry and preparing men for the Gospel, but in supplying defects in the chronology and history of the ancients. Without the sacred records we should have no exact account of time from the creation to near the Christian era; and Newton employs them in his chronology as supplements to profane history which was defective without them. A learned Heathen was of opinion that if men knew the origin of the world they should calculate from thence. Varro divides time into uncertain, fabulous and historical: from the creation to the flood uncertain; from the flood to the first olympiad fabulous; and from thence to his own time historical (o). The æra of the olympiads commenced above three thousand years after the creation; of which period we have no historical account which can be relied on except from the scriptures. Without this source of information we must be ignorant of ancient history from the creation to the beginning of the Persian empire; a period little less than three thousand years. Herodotus wrote about the time of Xerxes; Thucydides and Xenophon long after this period: nor is there any profane history extant except some dubious fragments but what was written after the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity. Profane histories furnish no true narratives of

Hebrew  
writings  
useful in  
chronology  
& history.

Bef. Christ  
776.

430.  
432.  
400.

536.

(o) Conserius de Die Natali, cap: xxi.



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- events prior to this deliverance and to the beginning of the Persian empire. The books of Berosus the Chaldean, Manetho the Egyptian, Sanchoniathon the Phenician and Megasthenes the Indian are either lost or counterfeited; and though authentic are supposed to have been written in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. 282. "There is nothing" says Julius Africanus quoted by Eusebius (p) "accurately written in history by the Greeks before the olympiads; all things said to have happened before that time are confused and incoherent." Thucydides (q) begins his history with the Peloponnesian war; because matters preceding that period were known only by conjecture: and Plutarch (r) goes no farther back than Theseus; all before his time being but fable and fiction. The annals of the Romans previous to the burning of Rome by the Gauls were lost at that time; and as to the Scythians and other barbarians we know little of them, except from the Greeks and Romans whose accounts are frequently blended with fable and falsehood. 392.

Evil tendency of Paganism not opposed by Heathen priests.

Perhaps it might be expected that the evil tendency of Paganism was counteracted by its ministers, or by the policy of statesmen. We admit that the wisest of the ancient Heathen lawgivers discouraged immoral practices and deified some virtues which were beneficial to their respective governments. But in process of time rulers did not employ religion so usefully; having admitted a system

(p) Eusebii Præp: Evang: lib: X. cap: x.

(q) De Bello Pelop: lib. I.

(r) Life of Theseus.



of fraud, impurity and cruelty blended with some harmless rites and innocent devotions. Nor should it be expected that either the Heathen religion or the Heathen priests could restrain the vices or passions of men. The Pagans did not pretend that their gods delivered moral precepts or offered motives to the practice of them; nor did the duty of the Gentile priests require them to inculcate sobriety, purity, justice or the social virtues. Augustine (s) denies that the Heathens ever appointed instructors to deliver moral precepts in the names of the gods; and challenges unbelievers to point out the places where such precepts were read or heard by the people. The people frequented the temples and attended the sacrifices and other rites; while the priests did not consider it their duty to instruct them in morality. They directed men's attention not only to its innocent rites but to the worship of persons who had been distinguished by lewdness, bloodshed and other crimes. Virtue requires a firmer basis than mere political wisdom; nor can we be surprized that when the wise institutions of the Roman government were subverted by tyrants, the Romans became the most vicious of any people on the earth.

If we compare what has been said in the III<sup>d</sup>. chapter of this work with the general spirit of Heathen authors we shall be convinced that the Christians and their laws were more favourable to the distressed than the Heathens themselves or the best of their law-givers. Heathen nations were less humane

The laws of Heathens less humane than those of Christians.

(s) De Civit. Dei, li, 56.

than

### *The History of the Effects*

than Christians; and the laws of the former though commonly just hardly convey an idea of universal benevolence. No Heathen lawgiver founded an institution for widows, orphans, &c. nor was there a single hospital in the Heathen world (*t*); whereas hospitals abounded in every nation of Christendom soon after the establishment of the Christian religion. Before it was published the Heathens used to inflict on debtors cruel punishments, such as servitude, whipping them, putting them to death or cutting in pieces their bodies and dividing them among the creditors where there were several of them (*u*). The first Christian emperor restrained these and other cruel punishments; and was the first who exempted debtors from the blows of sticks tipped with lead (*w*). Tho' many Heathen lawgivers surpassed the Christian in abilities; yet were the laws of the former less merciful than those of the latter, even than those of the Visigoths, Lombards and other barbarians who were assisted in the work of legislation by Christianity and its teachers. A law of Chindaswinthus king of the Visigoths was gentle to debtors and some protection to them against cruelty at certain seasons. Let no man, says this pious prince (*x*), bring an execution for debt or otherwise on the feasts of the nativity, circumcision, epiphany or pentecost, on the Lord's day and for fifteen days after Easter.

(*t*) Page 136 of this History.

(*u*) Vide Annales Baronii vol: i p: 135 A. D. 33.

(*w*) Cod: Theod: lib: iii de Exactionibus.

(*x*) Lindenbrog: Lex Wisig: lib: ii.

C H A P. VI.

A REFUTATION OF VARIOUS OBJECTIONS AND  
INSINUATIONS AGAINST THE UTILITY OF  
RELIGION.

*The divine attributes not investigated by philosophers.—Nor moral precepts.—Philosophers unable to reform the morals of the Heathens.—Moral sense and fitness of things feeble supports of virtue.—So are its pleasures and advantages.—So are the love of fame and law of honour.—Sources of the virtues of the Heathens.—Morals of the Romans in their degenerate state.—Bayle's opinion of the inefficacy of religion refuted.—An objection to the efficacy of Christianity refuted.—Rousseau's opinion of its evil tendency refuted.—Persecutions not chargeable on Christianity.—The intolerance of the Jews was political.—So was that of the Heathens towards Heathens and Christians.—Causes of the degree of tolerance exercised by Heathens.—Causes of various persecutions exercised by Romanists—and by Reformists.—Romanists and Reformists resembled each other in some points.—Shocking effects of persecution in various nations.—Dr. Priestly ignorant of the effects of Christianity.—Mr. Gibbons's error concerning its effects.—Causes of heresies, controversies and religious troubles.—Voltaire's error concerning the peaceableness of philosophers and deists.—His charge on Calvinism refuted.—Unbelievers criminal in aspersing a religion they allow to be useful.*

Divine attributes not investigated by philosophers.

IT has been insinuated that revealed religion is unnecessary for the purposes of morality; as the attributes of God and moral precepts may be investigated and enforced in various ways without the aid of revelation. In answer to this insinuation it will be necessary to prove that man did not originally acquire a knowledge of the divine attributes or of moral precepts by the investigations of reason, and that the Gospel furnishes more powerful motives to the practice of virtue than those offered by the unbelieving moralist. From a former part of this history (a) it seems likely that the Medes, Persians, Indians and other ancient nations learned from tradition refined ideas of the Deity; and the following considerations render it probable that to tradition and not to their own researches the sages were indebted for theological information. The most ancient philosophers entertained more just ideas of God than those who flourished several centuries after them; nor did the former entertain a single worthy notion of him which was not known to the Hebrews unassisted by philosophy, and long before the philosophers appeared in the world. In course of time the sublime theology of those men became blended with falshood and vulgar errors; of which we have a melancholy proof in Cicero's books concerning the nature of the gods. Had theological knowledge been deduced from men's own researches, it is probable that succeeding philosophers would have

(a) Chap. I. p. 8.

moved on the discoveries of their predecessors  
 and men who lived several centuries  
 Pythagoras or Thales would have been  
 instructed in sacred knowledge than  
 philosophers. But the reverse was the  
 The ancient sages formed more pure  
 of God than they who succeeded them;  
 mankind became more superstitious as  
 advanced to maturity. Hence the ad-  
 vance of natural religion may perceive the  
 culty, if not the impossibility of proving  
 a knowledge of the divine attributes was  
 stigated by reason. In proving this pro-  
 position he should acquaint us why profound  
 geometers and investigators of mathematical  
 sciences, the subtle inventors of logic and other  
 have been greater strangers to what be-  
 comes to a rational worship, than the most  
 ignorant and uninventive among the Jews or  
 Christians? and why the present Chinese  
 who are a sagacious and learned people are  
 strangers to it. To prove that philosophers  
 stigated the attributes of God, the Deist  
 should point out the time when an universal  
 ignorance prevailed with respect to those at-  
 tributes; the periods in which and the per-  
 sons by whom they were investigated; and  
 finally, that these persons did not borrow  
 from tradition or from the books of  
 Old Testament. But so far was this from  
 being the case, that a knowledge of the di-  
 vine attributes prevailed in the world long  
 before the art of logic was invented, and  
 before sophisters argued on the being and at-  
 tributes of God *a priori* or *a posteriori*, from  
 causes or effects. Had these attributes been  
 stigated by the Heathen philosophers we  
 well suppose that their religious systems  
 would

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would be more perfect than we find them. Pythagoras (*b*) forbid us to pray to God, because we know not what is convenient; and Plato (*c*) maintained that men know not how to pray, and that it is safer to abstain entirely than to err in the performance. A Platonic philosopher (*d*) acknowledges the difficulty of knowing what God will be pleased with; unless we are instructed by the Deity or by some person he conversed with, or acquire this knowledge some other way. Hence we may perceive the insufficiency of reason in discovering the true worship of God; and shall be further convinced of its insufficiency if we consider the absurd ideas which the philosophers entertained of the gods. Cicero who collected their several opinions assures us, that they differed about their shapes, residence, lives and actions; and his collection furnishes a melancholy proof of the insufficiency of the human mind to investigate the divine attributes or to form a system of rational worship.

Moral precepts not investigated by philosophers.

It is generally acknowledged that Socrates was the first who reasoned on the virtues and vices of men; but surely he did not mention a single moral precept which was not practised long before him by strangers to philosophy and to the art of philosophizing. I entirely agree with the citizen of Geneva in his opinion on this point. "It is said" says this author "that Socrates invented the doctrine of morals: others before him put them in practice; he had only to say what they

(*b*) Diog: Laertius.

(*c*) Dialog: ii inter Socratem & Alcibiadem.

(*d*) Jamblichus de vita Pythagoræ cap: xxviii.

“ had done and reduce their examples to “ precepts” (c). Aristides was just before Socrates defined justice, Leonidas gave up his life for his country before Socrates declared patriotism a duty; before this sage recommended sobriety the Spartans were a sober people; before he defined virtue Greece abounded with virtuous men. The Hebrews practised several virtues not only before Aristides and Leonidas, but even before the Greeks had an alphabet. Moses did not write as a dry moralist, but exhibited examples of virtues and vices among his people: he described the lives of the patriarchs and encouraged men to the imitation of their piety and virtues. After him the prophets exhorted to virtue and dissuaded from vice; and the proverbs of Solomon constitute a system of practical morality which surpasses the works of all the ancient philosophers in strength and perspicuity. Moses and the prophets did not puzzle themselves or their readers with metaphysical subtleties relative to the foundation of virtue, but pointed out men’s duty and furnished motives to the practice of it. They founded no speculative systems of morality, but gave specimens of virtues and vices in the actions of men, and shewed the rewards and punishments which respectively attended them. Moses and the prophets did not place the *summum bonum* in pleasure with the Epicurean, nor in the virtues of the mind with the Stoic, nor in the goods of mind, body or fortune with the Peripatetic; but in piety towards God and in an observance of his laws. If the moral

(c) Rousseau on Education.



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systems of the Pagans were collected, we should find them a heap of contradictions both in theory and practice; one philosopher condemning what another applauds as reasonable and praiseworthy. The clashing opinions of the Epicureans, Stoics, Peripatetics and other sects mark the weakness of the human mind on the most important of all subjects, that of the supreme good. The first and third books of Tully *de finibus* present us with the opinions and reasonings of the Epicureans and Stoics concerning the chief good; and the second and fourth books with the refutation of them. The fifth exhibits the opinions of the Peripatetics and of Cicero himself; and is nearly as defective as either of the other two; being silent about God and a future state those two great incentives to the practice of virtue. So ignorant was this philosopher about the foundation of morality that he imagined virtue aimed at honour and had no other reward. "Virtue" says he (f) "desires no other reward for all its labours and dangers but that of praise and glory: if you take away these what is there in this short life for which we should employ so much labour?" Seneca in his treatise on a happy life touches but lightly on future happiness; and adopts the opinion of the Stoics that man would be happy were his passions extinct and he perfectly pleased with his own conduct. Since then the reason of the refined philosopher was defective on a subject which related to the supreme good and happiness of man, we cannot expect that it

(f) Oratio pro Archia.

should serve as a rule for the bulk of mankind who are gross in their conceptions: What has been said will doubtless mortify the mere moralist who imagines that moral precepts have been investigated by reason; while his pride will be equally mortified by the following concession of an enemy (g) to the Gospel, namely that "the religion of Christ has brought morality to greater purity and perfection than ever it was advanced by all the philosophers and sages of antiquity." The insufficiency of the philosophers will appear further from the following pages.

A few observations may serve to convince men that the Heathen philosophers contributed but little towards a reformation of manners. They were but few in number and rarely instructed any except persons of fortune; and their notions were too abstruse for the generality of the people. They taught their disciples to dispute rather than how to live; their instructions were rather displays of knowledge than rules to be practised. They amused the understandings of their scholars without improving their hearts, and prescribed rules but violated them by their conduct (i). A writer (k) of extensive knowledge did not know of any except Phædo and Polemo who were reclaimed by them: while Christianity reformed myriads from vice to virtue. They had little authority to enforce moral precepts; and this little was diminished by endless disputes. Their wisdom

Sages unable to reform the manners of the Heathens.

- (g) Rousseau—Letter written from a mountain.
- (i) Quintilian lib: xii, 3 ad finem.
- (k) Origen adv: celsum, lib: iii p: 491 Edit: Paris 1733.

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was not levelled against the prevailing vices; nor did they labour to improve mankind in virtue like the teachers of the Gospel. They totally neglected the instruction of the poor; whereas the Christian clergy instruct the poor as well as the rich in every moral and social duty. The lectures of the former were too abstruse for the ignorant; while the duty of the Christian clergy requires them to adapt their discourses to the capacity of their hearers. Philosophy offered no inducement to relieve the distressed; whereas Christianity proposes noble motives to the exercise of beneficence.

Moral sense  
and fitness  
of things  
feels sup-  
ports of  
virtue.

It is generally admitted that virtue promotes the happiness of a nation and that vice is destructive both of public and private happiness: but men have differed about the most efficacious motives to the practice of morality. Plato founded it on the moral sense, and Aristotle on the fitness or unfitness of things discovered by reason. It is pretended that we know what is good and evil by the moral sense or instinctively; and that reason discovers the essential differences between virtue and vice. The moralist maintains that man has an innate idea of beauty and requires no argument to discern or approve it. As the eye perceives beauty and symmetry in visible objects, as we judge a dress becoming or an attitude graceful, so men of taste apprehend the propriety and beauty of particular actions. Some are transported with the charms of virtue and love it for its own sake; and despise the man who would require any other motive. These opinions have been maintained by several moderns;

denies; nor can it be denied that there is some utility in such opinions in enforcing moral duties. But I contend that the beauty of virtue, the fitness of things, the advantages of a moral conduct, the love of praise, the law of honour and other pillars on which philosophers erect a moral fabric independent of religion are in many cases but feeble and tottering supports. The doctrine of innate ideas is generally exploded; and the moral sense commonly so languid that some have doubted its very existence. And admitting its existence, it becomes a rule of conduct only to men of refinement, and to the rest of the world is no guide at all. For, tho' the instinctive faculty or reason should impress on the minds of certain persons a sense of virtue or vice; yet must knowledge acquired in either of these ways be but a feeble barrier against the violence of passion and strength of temptation. Such knowledge being confined chiefly to the understanding can operate on those only whose passions are weak and faculties improved. Had all persons a sense of the intrinsic beauty and excellence of virtue, this sense would be insufficient to induce them to reduce abstract truths to practice. Men of elegant fancy and refinement may perhaps be influenced by the charms of virtue and the deformity of vice; but the mass of mankind will not think virtue amiable but as it promotes their present or future interest. Practical morality must be built on motives addressed to the capacities of all men; and not on the beauty or deformity of virtue or vice, nor on the fitness or unfitness of things which few can comprehend. The

connoisseur

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connoisseur may declaim on the pleasures of poetry, painting and music as exquisite and sublime; but it would be vain to attempt to harangue men destitute of the fine arts into a love of pleasures of which they are insensible, and which perhaps many are incapable of receiving. And it will be equally vain to attempt to reclaim the dull and sensual, by descanting on the loveliness of virtue and the fitness of things which are feeble motives, and unlikely to operate like hope and fear passions so lively in the hearts of all men. The man who knows his duty from the moral sense or from reason no doubt condemns himself for acting contrary to his principles; but if there be no superior to bring him to an account, he will it is to be feared be easily reconciled to a conduct which brings pleasure or profit and exposes him to no inconvenience. When tempted to transgress he may ask himself the following question: what shall I suffer for acting contrary to the moral sense or to reason? These principles, it is true, require me to obey their dictates; but my disobedience will be attended with no inconvenience to myself. The defects of the moral sense and of reason are amply supplied by Christianity, which enforces its precepts by motives addressed to all ranks, to the learned and unlearned, to the philosopher and the peasant. Surely a man is more incited to good works by perusing the lives of good men than by the most elaborate discourses ever written by the philosophers. Moral discourses may convince the learned or ingenious of the reasonableness and expediency of virtue; whereas eminent instances of it may convince

convince the most ignorant that those virtues are practicable and prompt many persons to follow such examples.

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It will perhaps be urged that the moral sense and reason require us to practise virtue and shun vice, not merely on the foundation of abstract reasoning; but to obtain the advantages of the former and to avoid the evils and inconveniencies of the latter. Here the question assumes a new aspect, and moral obligation is no longer founded on speculative opinions, but on the general advantages and disadvantages of virtue and vice. Let us examine the consequences should men practise virtue because it is pleasing or profitable, or shun vice merely for being distasteful or injurious to their worldly interest. The remorse and dissatisfaction which generally attend vicious practices are punishments of disobedience: but surely they are inadequate and disproportioned to offences; since men feel less remorse the more wicked they grow. It should also be considered that the sorrow which men feel for their vices seldom arises from their having acted contrary to the moral sense or the fitness of things, but commonly from a violation of the principles which they have been taught in their childhood. Nor is the satisfaction arising from virtuous actions an uniform motive to the practice of them; since a man might refrain from a distasteful duty, indulge in palatable vices and violate the laws of morality where an inflexible adherence to those laws disturbed his tranquillity. Besides, should he be maliciously disposed and feel satisfaction in the misery of others he is not

Virtue  
feebly sup-  
ported by  
its plea-  
sures or ad-  
vantages.

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bound to perform any act of kindness towards them, but obliged to do them all the mischief in his power. Perhaps the individual is told that his interest is inseparably united with that of the community, and hence exhorted to the practice of morality. But admitting that the good of the whole generally produces the advantage of the individual, yet it does not universally produce this effect: and where a competition arises between private good and the welfare of his country he will not hesitate to sacrifice the latter to the former. There are cases in which he may gain more by betraying his country than he can naturally expect by advancing its interest. If the public good be the rule to regulate men's actions, they may be justified in committing murder, breach of truce and other crimes for the attainment of that object. If the temporal advantage of the individual be the motive proposed to him for the performance of his duty, he need not perform humane, just or public-spirited acts, unless they promote his selfish ends. There are numberless instances in which a strict adherence to virtue may prevent his advancement; where he may secure worldly advantages by wickedness and forfeit life by a rigid observance of the rules of morality. In such instances what shall determine a man to persevere in virtue, but a forcible conviction that he shall gain more by perseverance in it than he could possibly obtain by violating its laws?

Love of  
fame and  
law of ho-  
nour feeble  
supports of  
virtue.

Bayle (*l*) thinks the desire of praise and popular applause is a powerful motive to the

(*l*) Pensées diverses etc. clxxix.

practice

practice of virtue. "If" says he "the slave  
" to popularity lives in a country where ge-  
" nerosity and other virtues are admired,  
" and ingratitude and knavery make a man  
" hated and despised, he will restore a trust  
" even where the law cannot hurt him, and  
" be solicitous to avoid even a suspicion of  
" perfidy which is ever intolerable to the  
" lover of applause." But admitting that  
the love of praise is an incentive to many  
virtues in nations where they are fashiona-  
ble; let me ask what shall become of those  
virtues where they are unsupported by the  
fashion of the world? If the love of po-  
pularity be the motive to virtue, the vain-  
glorious man is frequently disappointed; the  
hypocrite cannot hope for applause when  
the best actions of good men are often as-  
cribed to unworthy views. In various in-  
stances fame fails as an incentive to virtue;  
while the religious principle prompts men  
to it in all cases. Praise seldom attends  
those who fail in their projects; whereas re-  
ligion rewards those whose efforts have been  
unsuccessful in the cause of virtue. As fame  
is sometimes acquired by the depression of  
others, the successful candidate is often ex-  
posed to slander and calumny; whereas the  
rewards of religion are unmixed with bitter-  
ness and totally independent on the caprice  
of the multitude. The world generally re-  
quires that virtue should be accompanied by  
learning or abilities; whilst religion prompts  
all men to virtue, the ignorant and the learn-  
ed, the humble and the aspiring. If all men  
were heroes or patriots fame would have lit-  
tle or nothing to bestow; whereas religion  
offers its most distinguished favours to those



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who despise praise and do good in secret. Were the public opinion the rule to direct the moral conduct of a prince he would be liable to be led into fatal errors; since some nations are so captivated with the shining qualities of a warrior that they overlook injustice, broken leagues and other breaches of morality, and perhaps look on the prince who studies the domestic happiness of his subjects with indifference or contempt (*m*). The law of honour too is extremely defective and omits many things without which a man cannot be truly virtuous or amiable. "The law of honour" says an excellent author (*n*) "is a system of rules constructed by people of fashion to facilitate their intercourse with each other, and for no other purpose. It regulates the duties between equals, but takes no cognizance of such as relate to God or to our inferiors; such as profaneness, neglect of public worship or private devotion, cruelty to servants, rigorous treatment of tenants or dependants, want of charity to the poor, injuries done to tradesmen by insolvency or delay of payment &c. which are accounted no breaches of honour, because a man is not a less agreeable companion for these vices, nor the worse to deal with in those concerns which are usually transacted between one gentleman and another."

Sources of  
the virtues  
of the  
Heathens.

To prove the Gospel unnecessary it has been remarked, that long before it was promulgated Pagan nations have been more

(*m*) See Neckar on the Importance of Religious Opinions ch: ii & vii.

(*n*) Paley's Evidences part III. ch: vii.

virtuous

virtuous than Christian states instructed in its doctrines. The Greeks and Romans are generally allowed to have possessed justice, patriotism, magnanimity, contempt of wealth and a dislike to luxury; whilst Christians are venal, dissolute and addicted to adultery, gaming and other vices little known to the ancients. But admitting that the Greeks and Romans practised many virtues at particular times; yet they displayed not one which is not required by the letter or spirit of Christianity. The virtues of the ancients are to be ascribed to their peculiar circumstances; nor could similar ones be expected where the Gospel was published. The ancient Heathens practised many virtues more from habit or necessity than from reason or choice. Their frugality was not a voluntary abstinence from things agreeable, but a gross use of such as they were accustomed to. They were content with a little because they were strangers to abundance; abstained from pleasures of which they had no idea; and were not covetous because they were little acquainted with money. Men who had been incessantly employed in agriculture, in martial exercises or in war had no knowledge of nor leisure for those vices which arise amongst us from wealth and idleness. In the time of Romulus no Roman possessed more than one acre of land; in the year of Rome 292 Cincinnatus the dictator had but four; and in 498 Attilius Regulus possessed but seven (o): so that the people wanted the means of indulging in vicious amusements. Besides, the practice of some virtues and vices depends

(o) Meursius de luxu Romanorum cap: i,

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on the degree of rudeness or refinement of the people; and polished societies commit vices which are little known among the rude and uncivilized. The manners of the same nation have differed at different periods; and in Athens and Rome in the times of Solon and Numa, they were strangers to vices which prevailed afterwards among their respective inhabitants. Men require strong barriers against vice in degenerate states; nor was the Christian code promulgated while there remained the smallest trace of purity or disinterestedness in the ancient republics. Had Christ appeared in the world during ages of virtue, then perhaps the Gospel might be thought unnecessary for the reformation of mankind; but the deplorable state of morals at his appearance proves his religion to have been then highly expedient and necessary.

Morals of  
the Romans  
in their  
degenerate  
state.

While the Romans were poor they practised many virtues; but when they grew rich they became more vicious and dissolute than any modern nation. When the Gospel was published they were not only less public-spirited, less just and less temperate than they had been; but indulged in drunkenness, gluttony, luxury and every excess. Soon after the second Punic war they remitted of their ancient severity and began to have a relish for shows, magnificence and pleasures. Compositions on the stage were then first introduced; lawsuits increased with the injustice of individuals; and physicians were employed to cure diseases from which temperance had secured the ancient Romans (*p*). Selfishness

(*p*) St. Evremont on the Genius of the Romans ch: viii,

prevailed instead of disinterestedness; integrity and justice became daily more rare; and most men pursued their own interest however it clashed with the public welfare. The Roman citizens became venal, the senators avaricious and unjust; and both were only ambitious of maintaining their reputation among foreign nations. The Romans were so corrupt and unjust on the decline of the republic that Jugurtha (*g*) called Rome a mercenary city whose destruction was inevitable could it find a buyer; and Cicero (*r*) declared the faith of pirates preferable to that of the Roman senate. Plutarch (*s*) informs us that in Cicero's time "avarice was at the height; that commanders and governors scorning to steal used to plunder by open force; that injustice and oppression were not considered as heinous crimes, and that he who practised them sparingly was thought worthy of praise." Juvenal (*t*) ascribes the decline of the Roman empire to riches and luxury:

*Nunc patimur longæ pacis mala; sævior armis  
Luxuria incubuit, victumque ulsciscitur orbem.  
Nullum crimen abest facinusq. libidinis, ex qua  
Paupertas Romana perit.*

According to Plautus (*u*) the Romans drank to excess; and the following lines of Martial (*w*) evince that among this people it was usual with a man to drink as many glasses

(*g*) Sallust.

(*r*) De officiis iii, 22.

(*s*) Comparison of Demosthenes and Cicero prope finem.

(*t*) Sat: vi, 292.

(*u*) Comedix passim.

(*w*) Libi i: epigram: 72.

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letters in her name:

*Nævia sex cyathis, septem Iustina bibatur  
Quinque Lycas, Iyde quatuor, Ide tribus.*

The Romans became so dissolute, that they engraved wanton figures on their cups (x), and committed such acts of beastly gluttony as would shock the delicacy of Christian readers. We may judge from Orsius (y) that there was infinitely more wickedness in the Heathen world than in Christendom: lust, luxury, sodomy, incest, tyranny and bloodshed. That work relates many shocking things done in different parts of the world before the introduction of Christianity, and is a severe though just critique on ancient nations. Meursius (z) points out such instances of luxury and extravagance in the apparel, houses, furniture, feasts and funerals of the Romans as would appear incredible were not his authorities unquestionable. They were effeminate in their apparel, dressed their hair like the women, affected the tone of their voices, painted their faces, shaved their bodies and used precautions that they should have no beards. "So far" says Pliny (a) the elder "are men from carrying a corset and armour on their backs, that they think their ordinary dress too heavy, provide that which is light and wear even summer and winter rings." Hence we may perceive

(x) Juven: Sat: ii, 95 & Plin: Nat: Hist: xiv, 22 & xxxii,  
—Edit: Paris

(y) Contra Faganos.

(z) De Luxu Romanorum cap: iii.

(a) Ib: xi, 27.

more solid reasons for the fall of the Roman empire than the introduction of or the abuses of Christianity, to which Mr. Gibbon (*b*) partly ascribes its destruction. Had those abuses contributed in any degree to subvert an overgrown empire, they would have been so far useful to mankind; but this author has by no means proved that they did so. We agree with him that the doctrines of passive obedience, the expenditure of large sums of money on useless persons of both sexes, religious contests and persecutions, do each of them tend to produce effects that are injurious to society. But he has not pointed out the instances in which each of these causes actually contributed to the decline or fall of the Roman empire. As an historian he should have exhibited the particular effects of those abuses in hastening the fall, and not argued from tendencies where the question related to a matter of fact.

There are other objections that clash immediately with the general design of this work. Bayle maintains that Atheism would do little or no mischief in states; and Rousseau contends that Christianity would be pernicious were it practised in its purity. The former (*l*) of these writers employs much learning and his usual subtlety in undermining religion and bringing it into disrepute. For this purpose he adopts Plutarch's (*m*) comparison of Atheism and Heathen superstition, and maintains that the former is less offensive

Bayle's opinion of the inefficacy of religion refuted.

(*b*) Ch: xxxviii Conclusion.

(*l*) *Pensées diverses.*

(*m*) *De Superstitione.*

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to God and less injurious to society than the latter. Having by this comparison lessened the abhorrence of his readers for irreligion, he compares religion and Atheism, and insists that men are little the better for the one or the worse for the other; as they do not act agreeably to their principles. The substance of his argument may be reduced to the following hypothetical syllogism; if men were to act conformably to their principles religion would be useful and Atheism detrimental to states; but they do not act agreeably to their principles; therefore religion is not beneficial nor irreligion injurious to society. This writer defends his minor proposition by various arguments drawn from experience and observation; though its falshood is evinced by the history of all religions and even by some instances adduced by our author himself. The history of the effects of Paganism, Judaism, Christianity and Mahometanism prove that men are actually influenced by their principles; and the preceding chapters of this work point out a connexion between doctrines and practices as between causes and effects. There never was a time in which some were not so true to their principles that they would sacrifice their lives rather than abjure them. Persecution never failed to produce Christian martyrs; and in some instances both Atheists and Mahometans have relinquished life rather than renounce their opinions. And surely men who sacrificed life in compliance with their principles might reasonably be expected to conquer or abate the less violent passions of lust, avarice, ambition or revenge. But the happy effects of Christianity are proved not only from deduction but from facts; which latter proof is

not

not to be overturned by the impudent assertions or babble of unbelievers. It would be false to assert that the Gospel uniformly produced its proper effects; and equally false to deny that there have been numerous and illustrious examples of men who have been influenced by its precepts. And admitting the Gospel to be frequently violated by its professors, we should no more argue against its efficacy from some breaches of its precepts than against the expediency of human laws from the enormous crimes daily committed against them. To prove that men are not influenced by their principles, he observes that Christian sects which differ widely in their tenets are nearly the same in morals; and ascribes any difference observable in their conduct to the genius of each nation: not considering that the Gospel is a practical institution, and that the differences of sectaries generally related to matters merely speculative, indifferent in themselves or unessential to morality. They disagreed about matters of faith or the government or discipline of their respective churches; but not concerning the virtues or vices pointed out in the Gospel. Bayle appeals to experience for the innocence of Atheism; since both Stratonian and Epicurean Atheists have been exemplary in their lives; and since it was the studious and moral man who endeavoured to destroy the belief of a God and not libertines or debauchees. We cannot judge of the influence of Atheism on the bulk of mankind from its effects on the refined whose passions are commonly feeble and who were probably trained in the way they should go. Men's virtues and vices depending more on early habits than on speculative opinions; we cannot



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cannot be surprized if Atheists and Deists should be good men after they renounced it. It is more reasonable to expect virtuous habits from persons educated in religious principles, than from Atheists whose motives to virtue are weak and fallacious. Hence Christians are often vicious from some defect in education, from the violence of passion or from the weakness of the religious principle; whilst Atheists are moral from constitution or habit. Besides, avowed Atheists who affected superior wisdom and held opinions which were offensive to their neighbours and supposed injurious to society, had powerful motives from vanity and prudence to be circumspect in their conduct; the whole authority of their doctrines and the innocence of their opinions rested in a great measure on their personal characters. Our opponent argues for the innocence of Atheism from savage tribes who lived together peaceably, and enjoyed social happiness without either divine or human laws. But supposing the truth of this doubtful fact, it does not follow that because men lived peaceably in a state of nature they would do so in a civilized form of government. In a state of nature where men's wants are few and easily supplied they have but few causes of quarrel or discontent; while in polished societies their passions are inflamed by indulgence and competition, many fantastic wants are created, and causes of contention are multiplied in proportion to the degree of improvement in the arts of civilization. The fallhood of Payle's opinion relative to the innocence of Atheism will still further appear by comparing the tendencies of Atheism and Christianity. The advantages of religion will

will appear most strongly by supposing all sense of it erased out of the human mind, and men's appetites and passions unrestrained by its influence. On that supposition many persons would doubtless abstain from crimes from a dread of civil penalties; but where they had a prospect of escaping damage, disgrace or death what would there be to prevent them from rapacity or injustice? *Quid faciet it homo in tenebris*, says Tully, (o), *qui nihil timet præter judicem et testem*. "What will that man do in the dark who dreads nothing except a witness or a judge?" "Man," says Voltaire (p), "has always stood in need of a curb and wherever there is a fixed community religion is necessary: the laws are a curb upon open crimes and religion upon those that are private." He who dreads nothing except a witness or a judge will, when withdrawn from the danger or disgrace of detection, not hesitate to gratify his lust, avarice, revenge, ambition or any other passion he is disposed to indulge. What can restrain the generality of men from theft, robbery or adultery? They know little of the moral sense, still less of the fitness of things and have no idea of the beauty of virtue or deformity of vice. To escape legal punishment and the censure of the world; to elude the vigilance of the magistrate and to avoid disgrace are the great objects of their concern. The sincere Christian on the contrary abstains from crimes though certain of escaping civil penalties; he spurns at the gain of the whole world if obtained at the ex-

(o) De Legibus, i. 4.

(p) Treatise on Toleration.

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pence of his salvation; and fears not only him who can kill his body but him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. He not only abstains from adultery, but checks even impure thoughts and loose desires; and if they should obtrude he expels them from his heart as forerunners of guilt. Persons influenced by religion may on particular occasions perform moral or social duties from constitution or convenience; from a sense of honour or desire of applause; or from the moral sense, the loveliness of virtue or the fitness of things. But none of these principles is sufficiently strong to induce men to sacrifice their interest or their pleasure when they clash with their duty. The virtues founded on such principles are occasional and temporary; and the principles themselves frequently fail to operate in cases of danger or difficulty. Nothing can support men in their duty in deep distress, or effectually encourage them to hold fast their integrity in trying cases, but a firm persuasion that God will wipe away all tears from their eyes or compensate their sufferings. The religious principle offers strong motives to perseverance in virtue; while the philosophic moralist offers none but what are feeble or defective. Suppose a man tempted to violate the laws of morality by a person who can bestow worldly prosperity on him, or sink him in poverty, distress or misery. What shall determine a man thus situated to preserve his innocence inviolate, but a heart impressed with a sense of religion? nor can the tempter offer any inducement which a mind thus fortified will not treat with contempt. In trying cases the Gospel produces an uniform goodness not liable to be warped  
by

by accident or occasion; nor can any thing else conquer every temptation, bear us up under every affliction and support us in our duty at all times, in all places and under all circumstances. And admitting that its precepts are frequently violated by men of strong passions and under strong temptations; yet if strongly impressed they would never be violated without remorse, which remorse would assist in reclaiming them when their passions had subsided. No well educated Christian can act wrong without some qualm of conscience; while Atheism frees the voluptuary, the gamester, the adulterer, the suicide, the duelist or the traitor from all apprehension of God, of religion and of a future state. In short, the Christian who is tempted to transgress or is oppressed by injustice; the innocent who is condemned by his judge or slandered by his neighbour derives strength to resist temptations and to endure his sufferings, from a consciousness that God is acquainted with and will reward his merits; while under these and similar trials the stranger to religion yields to the temptation or sinks into despair. Is it not then criminal in any man to attempt to weaken the religious principle and to reconcile the wicked to perseverance in vice? What public benefit can accrue to any state from destroying the motives to virtue and the preventives of immorality? Was any individual or community ever the more useful to others or more happy in themselves for disbelieving the existence of a God, a providence or a future state? Surely no man will be so impudent as to answer in the affirmative. It is allowable to purge religion of errors which stifle its truths and render it ineffectual; but  
it

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it is impolitic and criminal to attack it wantonly by falsehood, misrepresentation, sophistry and ridicule. Atheists and Deists have employed these various modes against natural and revealed religion without substituting in their room any solid support of moral virtue. They have weakened the religious principle in the minds of thousands, and have the impudence to complain that it does not operate more powerfully. Such a conduct would have been reprobated by the lawgivers and sages of antiquity; and has lately been condemned by a modern who is equal if not superior to any of them in wisdom and goodness. General Washington on resigning the office of president of the United States of America in the year 1796 thus expressed himself. "Of all  
 "the dispositions and habits which lead to  
 "political prosperity, religion and morality are  
 "indispensible supports. In vain would that  
 "man claim the tribute of patriotism who  
 "would labour to subvert these great pillars  
 "of human happiness, these props of men and  
 "citizens. The mere politician, equally with  
 "the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all  
 "their connections with private and public  
 "felicity. Let it be simply asked, where is  
 "the security for property, for reputation, for  
 "life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of  
 "investigation in courts of justice? Let  
 "us with caution indulge the supposition that  
 "morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the  
 "influence of refined education on minds of  
 "a peculiar structure, reason and experience  
 "both forbid us to expect that morality can  
 "prevail

“ prevail in exclusion of religious principles.” Even the French who abolished Christianity found it necessary to restore and re-establish both it and its teachers. The following is the substance of the *concordate* between the Pope and the French republic on the 5th and 7th of April 1802. On these days Portalis and Simeon two of Bonaparte’s counsellors of state maintained the necessity of a positive religion; in order to give morality the requisite energy, stability and certainty which it never could obtain from the philosophy of men. “ The idea of a God in the character of a legislator is as essential to the intelligent world as that of a creator and first mover of all secondary causes to the physical world. Human laws only restrain the hands, religion regulates the heart; the laws only respect fellow-citizens, religion embraces the human race; the laws are a check on public crimes, religion restrains those that are private. It is religion alone which releases from their fatigues the inhabitants of an immense territory, establishes equality among all ranks, calms every mind, affords a consolation for the inequality of rank, for chagrin and affliction, and calls all men to justice and humanity. Christianity has civilized Europe, created a social disposition in the countries where it has penetrated, and connects itself with the progress of the arts and sciences. It is connected with no form of government; it is the religion not of one state but of the world. It is the interest of government to protect religious institutions which are as it were the canals through which ideas of order, duty, humanity and justice flow

B b

“ through

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" through all classes of citizens. What  
 " would morality be if it remained confined  
 " to the lofty regions of science, and without  
 " religious institutions to bring it down with-  
 " in the reach of the body of the people?  
 " Morality without religious maxims would  
 " be like justice without tribunals. Religious  
 " morality which resolves itself into formal  
 " precepts has necessarily a force which no  
 " morality purely philosophical can possess.  
 " The multitude is more affected by that  
 " which commands than by that which is  
 " proved. Men in general require to be  
 " fixed; they require rather maxims than de-  
 " monstrations. As a code of laws is neces-  
 " sary to regulate our interests, a code of doc-  
 " trines is necessary to fix our opinions;  
 " without that, according to Montaigne, there  
 " is nothing longer certain but uncertainty  
 " itself. Science can never be partaken of  
 " but by a small number; but by religion  
 " one may be instructed without being learn-  
 " ed. The natural religion to which one  
 " may rise by the efforts of a cultivated rea-  
 " son is merely abstract and intellectual and  
 " unfit for any people. It is revealed reli-  
 " gion which points out all the truths that  
 " are useful to men, who have neither time  
 " nor means for laborious disquisitions. Who  
 " then would wish to dry up that sacred  
 " spring of knowledge which diffuses good-  
 " maxims, brings them before the eyes of  
 " every individual, and communicates to them  
 " that authoritative and popular dress with-  
 " out which they would be unknown to the  
 " multitude and almost to all men. Religion  
 " must be taken for the basis of education;  
 " we must apply Christianity in aid of mo-  
 " rality.

"rality. The child who from its cradle im-  
 "bibed its salutary maxims will know even  
 "before it has become acquainted with our  
 "criminal code what duties it should not in-  
 "fringe, and will thereby enter into society  
 "prepared for our most valuable institutions.  
 "For want of a religious education for the  
 "last ten years our children are without any  
 "ideas of a divinity, without any notion of  
 "what is just and unjust: hence arise barba-  
 "rous manners, hence a people become fe-  
 "rocious: one cannot but sigh over the lot  
 "which threatens the present and future ge-  
 "nerations. Alas! what have we gained by  
 "deviating from the path pointed out to us  
 "by our ancestors? What have we gained  
 "by substituting vain and abstract doctrines  
 "for the creed which actuated the minds of  
 "Turenne, Fenelon and Pascal? It is to  
 "the dangerous doctrines of the enemies of  
 "all religion that we must attribute the de-  
 "cline of morality; the government restores  
 "it in compliance with the wishes and the  
 "wants of the French nation." Is it not  
 pleasant to see a nation who abolished Chris-  
 tianity in 1794 establishing it in 1802? and  
 establishing it on account of advantages few  
 in number compared to those which it actually  
 produced: for Portalis and Simeon omitted  
 several benefits which Christianity has produ-  
 ced or is capable of producing among indi-  
 viduals and communities.

It has been urged that the Christian reli-  
 gion is pretended to be a medicine for cur-  
 ing the disorders of the mind; but that the  
 medicine cannot be good which fails in pro-  
 ducing that effect in numberless instances.

Another  
 objection  
 to the effi-  
 cacy of  
 Christiana-  
 ity consid-  
 ered.



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But Christianity having produced the desired effect in various cases; it would be as absurd to condemn it because it did not operate in all cases as to object to a medicine which had cured many and prevented or abated the disorders of others. We may judge of the effect of the Gospel from the conduct of those who practise its precepts; and should no more condemn it from the lives of those who are strangers to or refuse to observe its laws, than reject an useful medicine because it did not cure those who never tried its effect. In some the religious principle is sufficiently strong to subdue the passions, in others it is too feeble to produce this effect; some observe all or most of its precepts, and there are few Christians that do not practise some of them. The Gospel operates powerfully on some, languidly on others; and between these extremes we find intermediate classes of men compounded of good and bad qualities as religion and the passions seem to prevail. In many cases where religion is not sufficiently efficacious to render men truly virtuous it checks the progress of vice; and restores offenders to a sense of duty on the day of sickness or when the passions have subsided. But where men violate the Gospel without shame or remorse, we may be certain they are destitute of its spirit; or that their religion is too feeble to combat their passions. Were a sense of future rewards and punishments habitually associated with duty and disobedience, the religious principle would operate as uniformly as pride, avarice, revenge or ambition. The most profligate would refrain from vice did he see God actually present, or was he assured by faith of his invisible presence. If then we may judge of men's  
princi-

principles from their practice as of a tree from its fruits, we may be certain that wicked men have not a lively sense of the attributes of God or of the motives of Christianity. Some men profess it and perhaps never doubted of its truth; while others pretend to it for the purpose of deceiving. The religion of some consists in a mere assent to its doctrines, perhaps in external observances or in a lifeless repetition of creeds or confessions of faith. In these and such-like cases it cannot operate powerfully nor induce men to sacrifice their interest or their pleasure. The Gospel produced admirable effects on those who first embraced it from a conviction of its truth; but similar effects are not to be expected where men never were fully instructed in the fundamentals of Christianity.

The Heathens objected to Marcellinus a friend of Austin (*a*) that Christianity must injure society by detaching men from the world, by forbidding them to return evil for evil and by prompting them to despise glory that great spur to martial exploits. These ideas have been adopted by Machiavel (*b*) with but little variation, and repeated by Rousseau, Gibbon and other authors who borrowed and embellished the errors of their predecessors. Rousseau considers true Christians as slaves and dupes to tyrants and impostors, and the Gospel itself as inconsistent with liberty, valour and patriotism. Having in the 1st edition of this history (*c*) exposed

Rousseau's opinion of the evil tendency of the Gospel refuted.

(*a*) Epist: cxxxviii.

(*b*) Discourses on Livy book ii ch: 2 & Gentilius adversus Machiavellem.

(*c*) Sect: viii.

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his sophistry on each of these points; I shall only confront him with the following passage from his own writings. "If," saith he (*d*), "all were perfect Christians individuals would do their duty, the people would be obedient to the laws, the chiefs just, the magistrates incorrupt, the soldiers would despise death and there would be neither vanity nor luxury in such a state." Such would be the effects of Christianity were all its professors perfect Christians; nor could its most zealous advocate compliment it more highly!

Persecutions not chargeable on Christianity.

Various authors have insinuated that Christianity was the source of heresies, controversies, persecutions and other mischiefs in states. Charity and brotherly love, says Lord Shaftsbury, are engaging sounds, but who would dream that out of these should issue steel, fire, gibbets, roas? This question implies that torture, death and various cruelties were the offspring of Christian charity; tho' if this virtue had been universally practised, men would have escaped those instruments of torture. Collins, by observing that the infinite variety of opinions, religions and worships of the ancient Heathens never produced any disorder, insinuates that disorder and confusion are to be attributed to the Gospel which did not exist before its establishment. Voltaire and other authors maintain that religious dissension was peculiar to the Christians and unknown to idolaters; and that historian makes the following reflection on the assassination of Henry 4th of France, "it is a deplorable thing that the same religion which enjoins

(*d*) Social Contract iv: 3.

"forgive,

“forgiveness of injuries should have occasion-  
“ed so many murders; on the maxim that  
“they who differ from us in opinion are re-  
“probate and to be held in abhorrence.” But  
as the Gospels contain no such maxim the  
murder of that prince must be imputed to  
other causes. To expose all such opinions  
and insinuations it will be necessary to shew  
that Christianity does not countenance perse-  
cution, that the intolerance of the Pagans,  
Jews and professors of the Gospel was politi-  
cal, that the persecutions of Christians were  
contrary to sound policy, and that the Gospel  
itself is not chargeable with the heresies,  
controversies or other evils imputed to it by  
unbelievers. Our Saviour employed gentle  
persuasion and an example of virtue in con-  
verting men to his religion, and rebuked his  
disciples for desiring to call down fire from  
heaven to destroy the Samaritans who reject-  
ed his doctrines. The charity of the genuine  
Christian forbids him to consign to perdition  
those who have not embraced his religion  
nor perhaps ever heard of it. He works out  
his own salvation with fear and trembling;  
knowing that to whom much is given of him  
shall much be required. Christianity, instead  
of encouraging cruelty or persecution, teaches  
love, peace, charity and forbearance; and I  
defy the whole assembly of unbelievers to  
shew that persecution is consistent with the  
principles of it. We must therefore look  
elsewhere for the true causes of persecution;  
and shall not find it difficult to discover them  
in the passions or prejudices of the human  
heart: in pride, avarice, mistaken policy or  
revenge.

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The intolerance of the Jews was political.

A slight consideration serves to evince that the intolerance of the Jews did not arise, as some writers imagined, from the belief of one God, but from the constitution of their government. The Hebrew government was theocratical. Jehovah was not only their God but the first civil magistrate: the Hebrews were his worshippers as well as his subjects, and such of them as worshipped strange gods were treated as rebels are in other nations. The chief object of the Jewish state was to preserve the knowledge and worship of the true God; and to admit idolatry would defeat the purposes for which it was intended. Besides, Jehovah by his contract with the Israelites promised them peace and prosperity while they persevered in his worship; and threatened to withdraw those blessings if they worshipped strange gods. The man therefore who adopted or advised foreign worship was considered as an enemy to his country and punished as such. Hence it appears that other nations, whose government is not theocratical, can draw no precedent for persecution from the intolerance of the Hebrews.

Intolerance of Heathens towards Heathens and Christians was political.

Nor was intolerance peculiar to the Jews before the promulgation of the Gospel; since there were numerous examples of it among the Greeks and Romans before that period, notwithstanding the various instances of indulgence shewed by them towards those who differed from them in religion. Several intolerant acts displayed by the Heathens towards each other did not arise from their religion, but from the policy of statesmen and from those prejudices and passions which are common among men,

n. All ancient lawgivers having founded their political systems in some measure on the superstitions of the people; politicians in succeeding ages discouraged innovation, lest it should weaken the authority of their civil institutions and lessen their attachment to the laws and constitution of their country. This is the most general source of intolerance before the Christian era, and may account for the persecutions which were exercised against some of the philosophers. The charge of impiety and attachment to foreign worship was the pretext for putting Socrates to death; though in fact he fell a sacrifice to envy and malice (b). Aristotle (i) having offended the Pythia, over-seeer of the sacred mysteries, a jest was accused of impiety, and obliged to fly to save himself from his vengeance. Several of the Stoics and Epicureans were banished from Rome and other places, for claiming on liberty and raising sedition, for employing vain sophisms in sapping the foundation of virtue, and for corrupting the simplicity of the ancient morality. It is reasonable to suppose, that some of the motives which incited the Heathens to persecute each other prompted them to intolerance towards the professors of the Gospel. Paganism having attributed to extend the conquests of the empires; the Christians who laboured to subvert it were considered as enemies to states. Having openly despised the gods to whom the Pagans ascribed in a great measure the splendour of their country, they were persecuted as Atheists and as the cause of its decline.

(i) Diog: Laert: & Platonis apologia Socratis.

(b) Diog: Laert:.

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Men who charged with falshood all religions but their own were deemed proud, arrogant and haters of all who differed from them in worship. They were accused by one author (*k*) with being *odium generis humani* the objects of hatred with all mankind, and by another (*l*) with *nova & malefica superstitio*, a new and wicked superstition. Paganism having brought gain to architects, goldsmiths, carpenters, statuaries, sculptors, painters, augurs and other ministers of religion; the Christians by whom it was reprobated were persecuted by multitudes who suffered in their emoluments. There was a remarkable instance of this at Ephesus, where Demetrius who made silver shrines for Diana complained to other silversmiths that their craft was injured by St. Paul (*m*) who persuaded much people that *these be no gods which are made with hands*. The persecutions against the early Christians were also fomented by their having purchased security, liberty of worship or connivance from magistrates and informers (*n*); and Tertullian (*o*) laments that they employed such means to save themselves from persecution. Could the persecutions against the first Christians be traced to their sources, they would doubtless be found to have originated not only from the general causes which have been pointed out, but also from pride, avarice, jealousy or some selfish passion. However, as historians are often silent about the causes of many persecutions,

(*k*) Tacit: Annal: xv, 44.(*l*) Pliny Epist: xcvi.(*m*) Acts, xix.(*n*) Moth: de rebus Christianorum.(*o*) De Fuga in Persecutionibus juxta finem.

Those only are exhibited whose sources are known from the annals of history. Nero having been suspected of setting fire to Rome caused the Christians to be accused of this crime (p); and most persecutions after the death of Commodus arose from the avarice of princes or their captains, who saw no easier means of levying money than by seizing on the properties of peaceable Christians. The Emperor Maximin having assassinated Alexander Severus who protected the Christians; threatened this sect and treated them with severity; and they were persecuted by Diocletian at the instigation of his superstitious mother; but chiefly by the artifice of his enemies who fired his palace and charged it to the Christians (q). Christianity had made such a progress in the middle of the 3d century, that the Pagan temples and sacrifices began to be deserted; which exposed its professors to the utmost rigours of persecution. The persecutions endured by the Christians from the modern Heathens originated more from political than religious motives. The Jesuits were banished from China for meddling in politics, for maintaining idle controversies and for being more attentive to temporal than religious concerns; and in Japan, the Christians were persecuted on a charge of having designed to subject the empire to the Pope, to the Spaniards and to the Portuguese. The facts produced in the preceding and subsequent parts of this chapter prove, that the intolerance of both the Pagans and Christians

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(p) Tacit: ib:

(q) Lactant: de mortibus persecutorum cap: xi p: 22.



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Causes of  
the tol-  
erance of the  
Heathens.

It is undeniable that the Heathens exhibited numerous instances of indulgence to the worshippers of strange gods; but these instances were not the effect of a true tolerant spirit but of political causes and of the means by which their conquests were acquired. Before the Romans entered an enemy's country or besieged a town, the priests generally entreated the guardian gods of the place to come out and desert, and promised them the same or greater honours than they enjoyed before (*d*). When the Roman dictator took Veii he invited Juno to Rome; and the form of such invitations is given by Macrobius (*e*). The Romans shewed great indulgence to the worshippers of the gods thus introduced into Rome: in compliment to the gods who were supposed to be instrumental in extending their conquests. Strangers at Rome were allowed to worship their own gods after the custom of their country; but the laws of the state did not suffer its members to conform to foreign worship. In the city a Phrygian might celebrate rites in honour of Cybele; but no native Roman was permitted to adore that goddess after the manner of the Phrygians (*f*). The Romans suffered men to worship in private foreign deities whose adoration was consistent with the laws of the republic; but did not allow them to exercise in public any religion but the established (*g*).

(*d*) See Kortholt Paganus Obtreſtator p. 90.

(*e*) Saturn: iii, 9. p. 286 Edit: Lond: & Livy v: 16.

(*f*) Dion: Hall: ii, 19.

(*g*) Moib: cent: i cap: 1.

The Romans could not introduce into their  
 any even the gods of the conquered countries  
 without a decree of the senate; nor did they  
 ever admit the worship of Orus or Osiris,  
 though Egypt where they were adored was  
 Roman province.

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The Heathens exercised many intolerant  
 as before Christianity existed; and the first  
 Christian emperors influenced by the example  
 of their Heathen ancestors guarded their new  
 religion by laws and penalties. Men contin-  
 ued in this destructive error in consequence  
 of the eruption of the Goths and Vandals,  
 who discouraging learning and scriptural know-  
 ledge checked the mild influence of the Gos-  
 pel and abated its happy effects on those who  
 embraced it. But besides these causes of in-  
 tolerance, other circumstances contributed to  
 its rise and continuance. In the fourth and  
 fifth centuries heresy produced such dismal ef-  
 fects, that both princes and ecclesiastics judged  
 it politic to restrain and punish heretics; and  
 considered toleration as subversive of states and  
 destructive to religion. These erroneous ideas  
 were entertained by Sir Francis Bacon, Mon-  
 tesquieu and other ingenious modern writers:  
 Sir Francis (*b*) deemed uniformity of worship  
 absolutely necessary to the well-being of states;  
 and it was a maxim of Montesquieu (*i*),  
 Hume (*k*) and Rousseau (*l*) that rulers should  
 tolerate existing sects but discourage new ones.  
 It was chiefly on this maxim that Romish  
 princes persecuted heretics and Protestants;

Causes of  
 various  
 persecuti-  
 ons exer-  
 cised by  
 Roman  
 Catholics.

(*b*) Sermo lili de unitate Ecclesiæ.

(*i*) L'Esprit des Loix livre xxv chap. 10.

(*k*) Hist:

(*l*) Lettres de la Montagne.

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not considering that different Christian sects may and actually do obey the laws of states and practise the Christian virtues notwithstanding their differences. But besides these general sources of intolerance, the Christians exercised many persecutions prompted by avarice and by a desire of stopping innovations in religion and governments. Avarice, was the most general source of the sufferings of the Jews in Spain, France, Britain and other nations: and to their honour it must be acknowledged, that they often sacrificed their persons and properties rather than abjure their principles. To justify the robbery of this people they have been falsely accused of magic, sorcery, crucifying children, poisoning fountains and of other crimes (*m*). That the Jews were persecuted from a principle of avarice, rather than from an hatred of Judaism or a regard to Christianity appears strongly from the following observations. The Jews who rejected the whole Gospel were allowed synagogues in Rome; while the Protestants who renounced a few Popish doctrines were persecuted in that city. The Jews paid the Roman pontiff an annual tribute; while the Reformists were likely to lessen both his wealth and power. In the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella in the beginning of the 16th century Spain abounded with Mahometans, whom the nobles solicited the clergy to convert to Christianity, in order to attach them to the government of the country. The friars preached a few sermons for that purpose; but having found them inflexible advised the princes to banish or enslave them. The king was

(*m*) *Mod: Univ: Hist: vol: v folio, book xx ch: i.*

prevailed

prevailed on to consent to the banishment of them, and received ten pistoles from each of the expelled families for granting them permission to retire to Barbary. In the reign of Charles Vth. the Morescoes were persecuted by the inquisitors who received a large share of the estates of apostates; and in the reign of Philip III<sup>d</sup>. the expulsion of them was promoted by the Spanish clergy who were taxed for augmenting the salaries of the Morescoe vicars and for building and endowing additional churches (*x*). Hence it appears that the Spanish persecutions originated chiefly from avarice, but not from any of the causes to which Voltaire and others have imputed them. To stop the reformation which was likely to destroy the honours or emoluments of the clergy fires were kindled and gibbets erected; to retain their flocks was a chief object of persecutors. In many cases ecclesiastics did not attempt to convince heretics of their error, but executed them in effigy if they died before the execution; and judged it more politic to put one hundred innocent persons to death than suffer one heretic to escape (*n*). Bishop Gardiner observed that "if persecution of any kind is to be admitted, the most bloody is surely the most justifiable as the most effectual. Imprisonments, fines, confiscations, whippings," said he, "serve only to irritate the sects without disabling them from resistance; but the stake, the wheel and the gibbet must soon extirpate or banish all heretics inclined to give resistance and silence the rest" (*o*). In Holland and other nations

(*x*) See Geddes.

(*n*) Picart's Religious Ceremonies vol: i folio.

(*o*) Hume's Hist: ch: xxxv, xxxvii.

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the Protestants were persecuted; not from a principle of cruelty but to check the progress of the reformed religion (*p*). In the Netherlands, Heffels who sat as judge in the trial of heretics often fell asleep in court after dinner; and being awaked to give his decree rubbed his eyes and cried out, let him be executed (*q*). Hence it appears that he had formed the odious resolution of condemning all who were accused of heresy, and that making examples and not equity was the object of this inquisitor. Had he any other object he would have discriminated between the innocent and guilty, between friends and enemies, between Romanists and Reformists. Princes concurred with the clergy in opposing the Reformation; not from a thirst of blood, but to restrain the turbulent opinions which were taught by some of the Reformists (*r*). Philip II<sup>d</sup>. dreading the free spirit which appeared among his Protestant subjects in the Low Countries, established an inquisition for the punishment of heretics; and was encouraged to persevere in his cruelties by the wealth which he was to obtain by the forfeitures (*s*). James V<sup>th</sup>. of Scotland, the emperor Charles V<sup>th</sup>. and Francis I<sup>st</sup>. seemed to have been well disposed to the doctrines of the Reformation; had they not dreaded innovation in government from the supposed connexion between religious and political establishments. It would be easy to prove that in most nations men have been tolerated and persecuted rather on a political than religious account. The Jews

(*p*) Brandt book iv.

(*q*) lb: book ix.

(*r*) Savage's Lives of the Emperors.

(*s*) Modu. cent; xvi.

and Turks have been tolerated and even encouraged in Poland, on account of the tribute which they paid; while the Greeks, Lutherans and Calvinists have been persecuted in that kingdom. The Dutch East-India Company refuse to Lutherans and to other sects in their settlements that toleration which they allow to Pagans and Mahometans; as they have a rivalry with the former but not with the latter, and wish to prevent religious disputes.

If we examine the causes of the chief persecutions in England since the reformation we shall find them reducible to pride, ambition, avarice, revenge or mistaken policy. Henry VIIIth. put to death some Protestants for rejecting doctrines which he had detested against Luther; and persecuted some Romanists for maintaining the papal supremacy in opposition to the regal. Avarice was the chief motive of the persecutions in the reign of Edward VIth. The earl of Warwick and other Reformists having deprived Gardiner and other prelates of their bishoprics; these men who were the favourites of queen Mary were prompted chiefly by revenge to instigate this princess to persecute the Protestants. This queen loved the Pope and the Romanists who condemned the divorce of her father and mother; but hated and persecuted the Protestants who effected and defended it. The conduct and doctrines of the Pope and Jesuits induced queen Elizabeth to exercise severities towards her Roman Catholic subjects. Pius Vth. declared her illegitimate and excommunicated her; and certain Jesuits justified the assassination of heretics and alleged, that as long as she was suffered to live it was in vain to

Causes of  
the chief  
persecutions exer-  
cised by  
Protestants.

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expect a restoration of their religion (t). Besides, several Englishmen who had been educated in Rome and Rheims maintained the deposing right of the Popes, and declared Elizabeth's subjects absolved from their allegiance (u). To these causes we may impute the severities exercised against the priests and Jesuits who had been educated in those places, and the heavy fines which were imposed on the Roman Catholics of England. Queen Elizabeth mitigated the rigour of the laws against those who promised to adhere to her in case of a foreign invasion; and put few Romanists to death except such as conspired against her government, or attempted to restore the Romish religion by violence. Nor did this princess treat the Puritans with rigour on a religious account; but for dividing her Protestant subjects and adopting ideas of civil liberty which clashed with her prerogatives (w).

Reformists  
resembled  
Romanists  
in some  
points.

The Lutherans and Calvinists who affected to differ widely from the Romanists in their principles and conduct in some instances resembled them in both these respects. Each of them displayed the same asperity in their writings, the same degree of partiality in their councils and synods, the same opposition to any kind of alteration and the same kind of feeble arguments in support of the exceptionable parts of their respective systems. The Romanists quoted the authority of popes and councils, the Lutherans that of Luther and

(t) Dupin cent: xvi.

(u) P. Iffendorf's *Introd*: ch: iv sect: 22.

(w) Burnet's *History of the Reformation* & Rapin's *Hist*: book xvii.

the confession of 'Ausburg, and the Reformed that of Calvin, Beza and the Heidelberg catechism. The Romanists persecuted heretics, the Lutherans banished or imprisoned heterodox Protestants, and the Reformed persecuted those who would not adopt their tenets (\*). The Roman pontiffs opposed religious alterations of any kind; and certain Protestant churches are equally tenacious of two or three points that are exceptionable in their religion. The former suffered by their opposition to reformation; and so will the latter, if they wait 'till a reformation shall be effected by laymen who will not fail to carry their reformation to excess. In short, the Romanists persecuted Reformists; to gratify pride or avarice, to terrify their opponents or to retain or recover their honours or emoluments. The Reformists persecuted the Romanists and each other; influenced by the spirit of the times, by a love of truth, by resentment for past injuries and by a dread of their opponents if they should become powerful. "It is a principle," says Montesquieu (y) "that every religion which is persecuted becomes persecuting; for as soon as by some accident it rises from persecution it attacks the religion which persecuted it, not as a religion but as a tyranny." In troublesome times when each of two parties hopes to be the prevailing one or dreads oppression from the other, they are both often led to actions not deducible from their religious systems; nor is it fair to judge of individuals or aggregate bodies from what they do in anger and when

(\*) Brandt book xxiii, xlv.

(y) L'Esprit des Loix livre xxv ch: 9.



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exasperated against each other by injuries and insults. Had romanists and reformists persecuted from a regard for the Gospel, they would have directed their indignation against the unbeliever who rejected it altogether, rather than against those who differed from them only in a few points. But they persecuted the latter who aimed at power or privileges in states; but did not molest the unbeliever who never sought for either in consequence of his opinions, until the French monarchy was overturned by the Deists of France.

Bad effects of persecution in various nations.

An enquiry into the effects of persecution may convince us that they were direful, and such as might spring from pride, avarice, ambition, revenge or mistaken policy. This shocking practice has rendered men rebels or fugitives, caused domestic trouble and foreign invasion, and injured population, agriculture and commerce in Spain and other kingdoms. Above eight hundred thousand Jews, men, women and children consented to be banished from Spain in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella (q) and submitted to exile rather than embrace the religion of their oppressors. In 1492. Philip III's reign the Morecoes consisting of one hundred and fifty thousand men, women and children were expelled, and Spain was deprived of its most useful inhabitants. (r) From the expulsion of these an ingenious writer (s) dates the decay of Spain; and maintains that it never can be rich though the wealth of the Indies flow into its bosom. 1611. The nobles will not work and the lower orders imitate their example. The mechanics

(q) Mod: U: Hist: vol: v. folio p. 574.

(r) Geddes's tracts.

(s) Raynal's Settlements.

having

having been expelled; its wealth must circulate thro' foreign nations which supply them with manufactures. Such were the fruits of persecution! Such were the effects of violating the Gospel! In England and France population and commerce suffered by persecution. Several foreign Protestants who quitted England at the accession of Mary deprived the kingdom of many useful hands for arts and manufactures. The harshness of Charles 1st towards the Protestant dissenters contributed to raise that fanatical spirit which was pernicious to the religion and monarchy of England. Multitudes of them emigrated to North America; and Cromwell and many others were refused the privilege of emigration. In France also persecution was injurious; multitudes having fled from that nation and carried to other countries their arts and manufactures. The English settlers at New-york never thought of extending the fur trade, until they were taught to make beaver hats by those who fled from France in consequence of the revocation of the edict of Nantz; which edict allowed the Hugonots liberty of conscience. To French refugees the Irish and Scots are indebted for the culture of flax and hemp, and for the manufactures they produce (*w*). Gold and silver lace, stuffs, hats and stockings, which had been purchased in France before the expulsion of the Hugonots, were afterwards manufactured in Germany and England whether they fled for protection(*x*). Before the edict of Nantz was revoked, the city of

(*w*) Ibid:

(*x*) Voltaire Hist: ch: ccvii.

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Lyons employed eighteen thousand silk looms; but after that period the number was reduced to four thousand to the great detriment of population and commerce. The manufacture of hats has been injured at Coudebec and Neufchatel since the departure of the refugees; and the trade of Tours has been considerably diminished by the persecutions raised in that part of the kingdom (y). The manufacturers who fled from France to England met both protection and encouragement; to the great improvement of the silk manufacture in Britain. Hence we may perceive that toleration would have prevented the inconveniences of persecution, and promoted both population and commerce in states; and we find this conclusion confirmed by facts. In England, in the Low countries and in Goa toleration has been productive of these advantages; nor can it fail to be a source of love and confidence between governors and their subjects.

Dr. Priestly's ignorance of the effects of religion.

Dr. Priestly in his 56th lecture on the influence of religion on civil society treats the subject with little candour and still less information. He observes that religion has been detrimental to society; comprehending under that term enthusiasm, superstition and every species of false religion as well as true: nor could he have formed any other judgment from his narrow information on the fruits of the Gospel. He dwells more on the few advantages arising from excesses or corruptions of the Gospel than on its genuine effects which are numerous and permanent. To

(y) Volt: on Toleration.

thole

those excesses he attributes the liberty of Britain, to the extensive power of the popes the easy intercourse of different nations and the union of them when the Roman empire was disjointed, to the pomp of popish worship the preservation of the fine arts during barbarous ages, and to popery itself the check on despotism in Spain, Portugal and other places. Of the numerous advantages produced by the Gospel he mentions but two, namely the check on despotism and the abolition of servitude, and overbalances these advantages by the excesses of German Anabaptists and English levellers, and by the cruel persecutions of the bloody Mary and Philips of Spain. "Those evils, says this writer, and particularly these arising from persecution ought certainly to be taken into the account when we make an estimate of the benefits accruing to the world from Christianity." Had this author wished his readers to make a fair estimate of the benefits of Christianity, he would have exhibited the shocking state of mankind when it was promulgated, and the many happy effects which it produced in different parts of the globe. As to persecutions he himself admits that they existed in the world before its promulgation; and we have proved that the persecutions which prevailed since that period arose from a diametrical opposition to its letter and spirit. Let me then ask why the evils of persecution should be taken into account in estimating the benefits which have accrued from Christianity? This writer did not consider that the cruelties of persecutors and the excesses of fanatics originated from avarice, ambition or mistaken policy, or from ignorance, corruption or perversion of

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of the Gospel; and that persecutions and excesses far from originating in Christianity prove the excellence of an institution by an observance of whose laws all the inconveniencies fanaticism and persecution must vanish and disappear. We acknowledge there have been more troubles on pretence of religion in Christian than in Heathen states; and acknowledge it without a dread of injuring the Gospel. Gentile nations could commit cruel or criminal acts in a barefaced manner without any religious pretext; while nominal Christians required other motives besides selfish or vicious ones to palliate their offences and to reconcile their wickedness to themselves or others. Ecclesiastical historians have recorded every petty controversy for 1800 years; whilst the Greek and Roman histories do not comprize nine hundred, and take little notice of religious contests which had not considerable influence on the welfare of states. It is as unjust to impute to Christianity the evils of superstition, enthusiasm, persecution or selfishness as to accuse a chaste matron of the vices of a prostitute. The same kind of objections which is urged against religion holds equally strong against literature, law, physic, commerce and government. It would be a feeble argument against solid and useful learning, that literary pursuits have occasioned disputes to which the illiterate are total strangers. Such disputes did not originate from solid learning but from the ignorance or perverseness of the contending parties, from want of humility, from the intricacy of the subject or from the weakness or imperfection of the human faculties. How unreasonable then to ascribe the errors of divines to the religion

ligion they profess! Literature, jurisprudence, the medical art, commerce and civil society are upon the whole useful, though attended with some inconveniences; and surely the mischiefs which arose from religious institutions are but feeble objections to their general utility. The chicane of the law is a weak argument against jurisprudence, the frauds of the mountebank against physic, the wars of rival nations against commerce, the abuses of power against government, and the inconveniences of civil society against its numerous advantages. Why then urge similar objections against Christianity which not only tends to prevent any evils experienced on pretence of it; but to moderate the disputes of the learned, to supply the defects of civil establishments, to check the chicane of the law, the tyranny of rulers and the wars arising among rival nations? From what has been said in this chapter we may perceive the injustice of imputing to Christianity persecutions, heresies, &c. which originated from a violation of its precepts, from pride, avarice, revenge, ambition or mistaken policy. And surely it would be as unreasonable to question the utility of religion because it has been perverted in some instances, as to deny the expediency of law or physic on account of the evils experienced from pettifoggers or empyricks. Besides, those instances are so few that they may easily be enumerated; while the Christian virtues are so common as to be little noticed in history. Were the evils ascribed to religion frequent, they would not be so fully described in the historic page; were Christian virtues but rare, they would be pompously related by historians who are fond

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fond of relating extraordinary events. Comets which seldom appear engage the attention of multitudes; while few attend to the other planets which may be seen every day. The naturalist exhibits the effects of earthquakes, volcanoes and other direful phenomena; but is silent on the genial influence of the sun which daily bestows light, heat and comfort on mankind.

Gibbon's  
error con-  
cerning  
the effects  
of Chris-  
tianity.

Mr. Gibbon asserts that monastic institutions were productive of evils which fully counterbalanced the advantage of the Gospel. This is an extraordinary assertion in one who was acquainted with several benefits of it; and who must have known that the Heathens had monks before it was promulgated, and that the monasteries of the Christians made ample amends to mankind for any evils they occasioned. He admits (a) that the Gospel or the Church discouraged suicide, advanced literature, checked oppression, manumitted slaves, softened the ferocity of barbarous nations; and that in the most corrupt state of Christianity barbarians might learn justice from the law and mercy from the Gospel. These are but few of the benefits of Christianity; and yet these few infinitely outweigh the inconveniencies of monasteries. The Heathens had monks of the order of Romulus, Mars, Flora, Pomona &c. Some were of the society of Augustus, Adrian, Antoninus or Aurelius; and the mendicants of the order of the mother of the gods rambled about exacting alms from the

(a) Hist: ch: xxxviii, xlv.

people.

people(*d*). Polydore Virgil(*e*) observes that the popes induced men to quit these vain societies, and to form more pure ones called from their respective founders Augustines, Benedictines, Franciscans &c. The first Christian monks were rigid and austere, exercised sobriety, charity and other virtues and laboured with their hands in imitation of St. Paul(*x*), who commanded that if men did not work neither should they eat. Before the art of printing was discovered the monks transcribed and preserved several books; and many useful inventions were the offspring of the convents. They sheltered the wretched from oppression, softened in some measure the fierceness of barbarians, and furnished comfortable retreats from war and tyranny. Even when the monks became degenerate the monasteries served as schools for the education of youth, as inns for the accommodation of strangers, and as repositories for books which otherwise must have perished when the laity became attached to martial achievements. Surely these and other advantages of monasteries compensated in a great degree for the inconveniencies they caused; tho' they were not productive of all those benefits when they were suppressed by the reformers,

Sir Francis Bacon(*g*) derives religious dissension from men's notion of the true God who is jealous of the worship paid to the Heathen deities: and whose worshippers imagined they pleased him by punishing those

Causes of  
heresies,  
controversies  
and  
religious  
troubles.

(*d*) Apul: Metam: viii, 3 vol: ii, p. 258.

(*e*) De Inventione. vii. 6, 7.

(*x*) 1 Thess: iii, 9.

(*g*) Sermo iii de ecclesiæ unitate.

who



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who paid that reverence to false gods which was due to the true. This attribute may perhaps be a source of dissension between true worshippers and idolaters; but does not account for the dissensions among Jews and Christians, nor between Christians themselves who believed in one God. This venerable writer observes that religious dissension was unknown to the Pagans; as their religion consisted in rites and not in the belief of certain articles and doctrines. But, were there no disorders occasioned by the Bachanals in Rome? Did not religious feuds run high in Egypt when the inhabitants of one province came to disturb the festival of another, and when multitudes were wounded and slain on both sides (*b*). The Heathens held opinions which were the foundation of their rites, and rites which tended to create differences. Nay in some cases, rites are more likely to excite disputes than doctrines; as the former strike the senses while a man's tenets are often known to God alone. The ring in marriage, the sign of the cross in baptism, the attitude for receiving the sacrament &c. have occasioned disputes as well as the doctrines of transubstantiation, of the trinity or of predestination. Why then might not the Pagans quarrel whose worship was ritual; and who believed tenets more likely to raise cavils than the doctrines of the Gospel? Other writers adopted the errors of Bacon concerning the tolerance and religious harmony of the Heathens, and suggested causes of dissension different from those which history exhibits. Christianity may be vindicated from

(*b*) See Philoleutherus Lips: p. 20, Edit: Lond: 174

such aspersions; by proving that the evils imputed to it have arisen from mistaken policy, false philosophy, dogmatism, revenge, avarice or enthusiasm, from ignorance of the Gospel, from perversions of it, from a want of it's spirit or from a violation of it's precepts. If we examine the causes of the principal heresies and disputes which subsisted among Christians we shall find they are not chargeable on the Gospel. The Christian church having originally consisted of Jewish and Gentile converts; it's members must have retained at least for a time their respective opinions. Some converts were philosophers who wrested the Gospel to a conformity to their own dogmas; others blended it's tenets with those of the oriental philosophy and the Egyptian theology; some proselytes eagerly retained the rites, opinions and traditions of the Jews; and all of them interpreted the Gospel according to the ideas which they entertained before they embraced it. Voltaire justly imputes controversies to the enquiring spirit which prompts men to exceed the limits prescribed to their knowledge, or to the ambition of divines who were eager to become the heads of sects or parties (*d*). If we consider the origin of the disputes in France and the low countries, we can not impute them to the letter or spirit of the Gospel. Grace and predestination were the chief subjects of controversy among the Jesuits and Jansenists of France, as well as between the Arminians and Gomarrists of Holland. In France, according to Voltaire (*p*), this con-

(*d*) See Moshe: Eccl: Hist: Cent: iii, iv, vi.

(*p*) Hist: ch: ccviii.

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troverſy originated from pride, obſtinacy or a love of victory; while in the Netherlands it was fomented by a political party. The queſtions agitated in the low countries related to the trinity, predeſtination, grace, reprobation, ſatisfaction, ſalvation of infants &c. queſtions well calculated for the purpoſes of a party; as they divided fellow-subjects, were too obſcure ever to be decided and might be eaſily revived when occaſion required it. It is diabolical to divide men by controverſies of little moment, or even by important ones where the ſubject is too abſtruſe for the bulk of mankind. Men who diſputed with vehemence on ſuch queſtions muſt have been influenced by ſome ſelfiſh motive, enemies of Chriſtianity or ſtrangers to it's ſpirit. The diſcuſſion of thoſe ſubjects was more fit for devils than for the preachers of peace; which probably induced Milton(*r*) to repreſent the Stygian council engaged on ſuch queſtions in the abſence of Satan:

Others apart ſat on a hill retired  
In thoughts more elevate and reaſoned high  
On providence, foreknowledge, will and fate;  
Fixt fate, free-will, foreknowledge abſolute,  
And found no end in wand'ring mazes loſt.

**Voltaire's error concerning the peaceableneſs of ancient philoſophers and modern Deists.** I cannot agree with Voltaire in reſpect to the peaceableneſs of the ancient philoſophers who in ſome inſtances were turbulent and puniſhed as ſuch. "Were not the Epicureans," ſays a learned writer(*e*), "driven out from ſeveral cities for their debauches"

(*r*) *Paradiſe Loſt*, Book ii.(*e*) *Phileleuth: Lipſienſis*, ib:

“ries and tumults they caused there? Did  
“nor Antiochus banish all philosophers out  
“of his whole kingdom, and make it death  
“to the youth who learned of them and  
“confiscation of goods to the parents? Did  
“not Domitian banish all the philosophers  
“out of Rome and Italy?” A respectable  
Heathen author (*f*) exposes the philoso-  
phers of his time as an idle, litigious, vain,  
peevish, proud, gluttonous and useless set.  
“These men”, saith he, “divide themselves  
“into sects under the names of Stoics, Epi-  
“cureans, Academics and Peripatetics; and  
“declaim on temperance, moderation and  
“virtue, while they are luxurious and co-  
“vetous, griping pedants and railers at  
others.” He also ridicules their lewdness and  
hypocrisy, their indecencies and immoralities,  
their drunkenness and wrangling which often  
terminated in blows. Suetonius (*g*) observes  
that in the reign of Tiberius the Roman se-  
nate banished all astrologers and magicians  
out of Italy, and that the emperors in banish-  
ing the philosophers only complied with an  
ancient law against them. Hence we may  
perceive the falshood of Voltaire’s assertion,  
that the controversies of the philosophers  
have been peaceable; while those of divines  
were turbulent and bloody. Voltaire also ob-  
serves that “Deists though numerous in Eu-  
“rope never excited rebellions like Chris-  
“tian sectaries.” Deists having been too  
few in any particular nation to create distur-  
bances, deserved little credit for their peace-  
ableness; especially as they laboured to sap

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(*f*) Lucian’s Voyage to the Moon, and his Lapithæ.

(*g*) In Tiberio cap: xxxvi & in Vitellio cap: xiv.

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the foundation of morality, which is an evil greater in magnitude and more permanent in its effects than civil commotions. Had Mr. Voltaire lived to see the late revolution in France, he must have been convinced that Deists when in power are not only turbulent but as arbitrary and intolerant as any despot or inquisitor that ever disgraced the Christian world. "Can any one", says Simeon, in his excellent speech on the re-establishment of Christianity in France, "imagine the intolerance of priests to be worse than that of Atheists and Deists? What! were those that assaulted Christianity with violence more tolerant than Fenelon, Turenne or Belzunc? No! no! let us not return to barbarism." Had Voltaire lived to the year 1796 he might have seen that a subversion of monarchy was planned in Ireland by a society of Deists, some of which had been busy for some time before in propagating irreligion and treason among the people; to reconcile them to those murders and confiscations which must attend the execution of their villainous designs.

Voltaire's  
faïe  
charge on  
Calvinism  
refuted.

According to Voltaire (u) Calvinism is agreeable to a republic, and from its very nature produced civil wars and shook the foundation of states. But in no part of the writings of Calvin has he prompted subjects to oppose the laws, the constitution or the rulers of states. The bishop who was sovereign of Geneva had been expelled by Farrel when Calvin arrived there; and this reformer wisely adapted his platform to the popular

(u) Hist: ch: cxii. and ccviii.

government

government which he found established in that city. If then some of his pretended followers inverted his method and wished to accommodate their political systems to his religious one; surely no blame is to be imputed either to him or to his tenets. It is undeniable that several of them have been enemies to monarchical government; but their turbulence is no more chargeable on his system than the vices of nominal Christians on the Christian institution. This reformer speaks respectfully of monarchy, and acknowledges the difficulty of determining what form of government is best. This man who was wise and good except in the case of Servetus observes, that each form was appointed by God, proves from Scripture that even wicked rulers and magistrates are to be revered and obeyed, and forbids individuals to calumniate or expose them<sup>(w)</sup>. Is it not then unjust to confound different sects of protestant dissenters; to represent the genuine followers of Calvin as republicans and levellers and disposed to subvert aristocratical and monarchical governments? The real follower of Calvin will not make his pulpit the vehicle of sedition, divert his flock from industry to politics nor inflame the minds of those whom it is his duty to render peaceable and happy. Our Saviour did not meddle in politics, his kingdom was not of this world and he who professes to teach his religion in its purity will follow his example. The disciples of Calvin have been falsely charged with the murder of Charles 1st: the Scots

(w) Calvin's Institutes, lib. iv. cap. xx. de Politica Administratione.

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Deists  
criminal  
in aspers-  
ing religi-  
on which  
they allow  
to be use-  
ful.

Even men who laboured to erase out of the mind all respect for religion have acknowledged the importance and expediency of it. By comparing the following passages of authors with the general tenour of their works we shall be convinced of their depravity in decrying religion they allow to be useful. Bayle (a) admits religion to be useful if men acted agreeably to its principles: and Voltaire (b) says expressly that religion is necessary in every fixed community; the laws are a curb upon open crimes and religion on those that are private. "No religion," says Bolinbroke (c), "ever appeared in the world whose natural tendency was so much directed to promote the peace and happiness of mankind as the Christian.—The system of religion recorded by the Evangelists is a complete system to all the purposes of true religion natural or revealed.—The Gospel of Christ is one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, benevolence and universal charity.—Supposing Christianity to have been purely an human invention it had been the most amiable and the most useful invention that ever was imposed on

(x) Puffend: Introd: ch: iv. sect: xxviii. Rapin's Hist: Book xxi, xxii: Mosht: cent: xvii. Hume's Hist: ch: lviii.

(a) Pensées divers. sect: cviii.

(b) On Toleration—See the Jews Letters, Findlay and Nonette in answer to Voltaire.

(c) Analysis of Bolingbroke, sect: xii.

"mankind for their good." Hume (*d*) acknowledges that "the disbelief of futurity loosens in a great measure the ties of morality and may be supposed for that reason pernicious to the peace of civil society." Rousseau (*e*) acknowledges that "if all were perfect Christians individuals would do their duty, the people would be obedient to the laws, the chiefs just, the magistrates incorrupt, the soldiers would despise death and there would be neither vanity nor luxury in such a state." Gibbon (*f*) admits that the Gospel or the church discouraged suicide, advanced erudition, checked oppression, promoted the manumission of slaves, and softened the ferocity of barbarous nations: that fierce nations received at the same time the lessons of faith and humanity, and that in the most corrupt state of Christianity the Barbarians might learn justice from the law and mercy from the Gospel. And yet these unbelievers have been so vile and perverse as to decry a system which they acknowledge to be useful! How ungrateful to employ talents granted for great purposes against the giver of those talents and against the good of his creatures? It would not be hard to prove the scoffer of religion to be nearly as mischievous an animal as if he laboured to subvert the existing laws against robbery or murder. Both divine and human laws being conjointly unable effectually to restrain the passions of

(*d*) Essay xi; See the able answers of Campbell and Adams and the late excellent reply of president Kirwan in the transactions of the royal Irish Academy, vol: viii, p. 175.

(*e*) Social Contract, iv. 8.

(*f*) Hist: ch. xxxviii, xlvi. See the answers of bishop Watson, Dr. Chalmers, Mr. Davis &c. &c.



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VI. } men; he can be no friend to society who  
exerts himself to abolish or weaken either  
of these restraints. Gibbon acknowledged  
he aimed at fame as the grand motive and  
reward of his labours; to all candidates for  
fame I would recommend the following lines  
of a celebrated poet (x).

Unblemished let me live or die unknown  
Oh! grant an honest fame or grant me none.

(x) Pope's Temple of Fame.

WE should be strangers to the effects of religion on multitudes were it not for their exalted stations; which observation equally applies to several laymen distinguished by talents and information. The chief of these were Lord Bacon, Grotius, Selden, Salmasius, Hale, Paschal, Boyle, Locke, Newton, Boerhave, Addison, Maclaurin and Lyttleton (*a*). Francis Bacon Lord High Chancellor of England was one of the most universal geniuses that any age or country has produced; and his writings furnish incontestible proofs that his wisdom, knowledge and benevolence were extraordinary. He was a profound lawyer, possessed the most comprehensive mind, and was serviceable to mankind by directing their thoughts to the works of nature and to facts from scholastic speculations and idle controversies. This illustrious character speaks of religion with respect; and the following prayer which was found among his papers in his own hand-writing proves him to have been influenced by a truly religious spirit. “Most gracious Lord, my merciful father; my creator, my redeemer, my comforter! thou foundest and searchest the depths and secrets of all hearts; thou acknowledgest the upright; thou judgest the hypocrite; vanity and crooked ways cannot be hid from *thee*.—I loved thy assemblies; I mourned for the divisions of thy church; I delighted in the brightness of thy sanctuary.—The state and bread of

Effects of Christianity on certain modern laymen of distinguished abilities.

Bacon, 1610.

(*a*) See the Biograph: Brit: the British Plot: and the 10th Edition of Lindley Murray's valuable collection of the lives of great men. This section should be inserted at p. 268.

the

" the poor and oppressed have been precious  
 " in my eyes : I have hated all cruelty and  
 " hardness of heart, I have though a despised  
 " weed endeavoured to procure the good of  
 " all men. If any have been my enemies,  
 " I thought not of them, neither has the Sun  
 " gone down upon my displeasure : but I have  
 " been as a dove free from superfluity of ma-  
 " liciousness. Thy creatures have been my  
 " books, but thy Scriptures much more so.  
 " I sought thee in the courts, the fields and  
 " the gardens; but I have found thee in thy  
 " temples." Such was the piety of this wise  
 man; and in comparison of him the greatest  
 of the deists appears shallow and despicable!  
 Grotius, Hugo Grotius a Hollander possessed a pro-  
 1623. found genius, a solid judgment and a won-  
 derful memory. Before he was fifteen he  
 maintained public theses in mathematics, phi-  
 losophy and law with the highest applause;  
 and afterwards, notwithstanding the embassies  
 and other public business in which he was  
 employed, composed a number of excellent  
 works the chief of which are his treatise of  
 the rights of peace and war, a treatise on the  
 truth of the Christian religion, commentaries  
 on the holy Scriptures and the history and  
 annals of Holland. The queen of Sweden  
 appointed him her ambassador at Paris; which  
 dignity however was not agreeable to a man  
 of his turn of mind. His sentiments respect-  
 ing it are contained in a letter which he wrote  
 to his father from Paris. " I am," says he,  
 " really quite tired out with honours. A pri-  
 " vate and a quiet life alone has charms for  
 " me; and I should be happy to be in a situa-  
 " tion in which I could employ myself upon  
 " works of piety only, and works that might  
 " be

“be useful to posterity.” He had the highest respect for religion and virtue in whatever condition of life they were found: and how much he preferred them to all that the world could bestow appears from the following declaration. “I would give all my learning and honour for the plain integrity of John Urick, a poor man of great piety who spent eight hours of his time in prayer, eight in labour and but eight in meals, sleep and other necessities.” In his last sickness he was tranquil and resigned to the will of God: expressed his faith in Christ and declared that his hope rested upon him. John Selden a native of England and a contemporary with Grotius was profoundly learned, and skilled in the Hebrew and Oriental languages beyond any man of his time; Grotius styles him the glory of the English nation. His mind also was as great as his learning. He was hospitable, generous and charitable; he took delight in doing good and in communicating his knowledge: above all he was a serious Christian. This celebrated man when he was near the end of his days declared in a conference with arch-bishop Usher, that “tho’ he had been laborious in his literary enquiries and possessed himself of a number of valuable books and manuscripts upon all ancient subjects; yet he could rest the happiness of his soul on none of them except the holy Scriptures.” Salmasius a Frenchman possessed extraordinary abilities and profound erudition. He was knowing in almost every thing; in school divinity, in law, in philosophy, in criticism; and he was so consummate a linguist that there was scarcely a language in which he had not made a considerable proficiency.

Selden,  
1620.

Salmasius,  
1630.

His

His works which are numerous and on various subjects gained him as much fame as strong powers and vast erudition can procure. His name was sounded thro' Europe; and he had great offers and invitations from foreign princes and universities. The Venetians thought his residence among them would be such an honour that they offered him a prodigious stipend: the university of Oxford made some attempts to get him into England; and the pope invited him to settle in Rome. Cardinal Richlieu used all possible means to detain him in France, even desiring him to make his own terms: and Christina queen of Sweden shewed him extraordinary marks of esteem and regard. When this celebrated man arrived at the evening of life, he acknowledged he had too much and too earnestly engaged in literary pursuits, and greatly overlooked those objects in which true and solid happiness consists: Oh! said he, I have lost an immense portion of time; time that most precious thing in the world! had I but one year more it should be spent in studying David's psalms and Paul's epistles. Oh! Sirs, said he to those about him, mind the world less and God more: the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding. Lord Chief Justice Hale was profoundly skilled in mathematics, in natural and moral philosophy and in a knowledge of the law; and did honour to the bench by his abilities, his piety and his uprightness. He wrote well on various subjects; and expressly declared "there is no book like the Bible for excellent learning, wisdom and use, and that it is want of understanding in those who think or speak otherwise." He divided his  
time

Hale,  
1650

time between the duties of religion and the studies of his profession: and his retired meditations on religious subjects manifest an extraordinary degree of piety and humility. "True religion," says he, "teaches the soul a high veneration for Almighty God, a sincere and upright walking as in the presence of the invisible, all seeing God by whom all our thoughts are legible. It renders the heart highly thankful to him as his creator, redeemer and benefactor. It makes a man entirely depend on him, seek him for guidance, direction and protection, and submit to his will with patience and resignation of soul. It crushes all pride and haughtiness both in a man's heart and carriage, and gives him an humble state of mind before God and man. It gives a man a right estimate of this present world; so that he never loves it more than it deserves. It makes the wealth and glory of this world, high places and great preferments of but little consequence to him; so that he is neither covetous nor ambitious nor over solicitous about them.—In the course of my life," saith he, "I have been in as many stations and places as most men. I have experienced almost continual motion; and although of all earthly things I have most desired rest and a fixed private station, yet the various changes I have seen and found, the public employments that without my seeking and against my inclination have been put upon me, and many other interventions as well private as public have made it literally my experience that I have here no continuing city. When I had designed for myself a settled mansion  
and

" and fitted it to my convenience and repose,  
 " I have been presently constrained by my  
 " necessary employments to leave it and re-  
 " pair to another. And thus my dwellings  
 " have been like to so many inns to a tra-  
 " veller, of longer continuance indeed but of  
 " almost equal instability. This unsettledness  
 " of station though troublesome has given  
 " me a good and practical moral; namely  
 " that I must not expect my rest in this low-  
 " er world, but must consider it as the place  
 " of my journey and pilgrimage and look  
 " further for complete happiness." Paschal  
 a Frenchman was an eminent philosopher, a  
 profound reasoner, an elegant writer and a  
 man of most exemplary piety and virtue.  
 From his youth he gave proofs of an un-  
 common capacity. He desired to know the  
 reason of every thing, and when sufficient  
 reasons were not offered sought for better:  
 nor would he ever yield his assent but to such  
 as appeared to him well grounded. It is  
 a comfortable reflection that a man of his  
 turn, with a mind so comprehensive and saga-  
 cious entertained the most exalted sentiments  
 of the Christian religion! The celebrated  
 Bayle thus speaks of this distinguished person.  
 " A hundred volumes of religious discourses  
 " are not of so much avail to confound  
 " the impious as a simple account of the life  
 " of Paschal. His humility and his devo-  
 " tion mortify the libertines more than if they  
 " were attacked by a dozen missionaries.  
 " They can no longer assert that piety is  
 " confined to men of little minds when they  
 " behold the highest degree of it in a geo-  
 " metrician of the first rank, the most acute  
 " metaphysician

Paschal,  
 no 50.

“ metaphysician and one of the most pene-  
 “ trating minds that ever existed. Mathe-  
 matical and philosophical studies in which he  
 had eminently distinguished himself he decli-  
 ned at an early age, and resolved to devote his  
 time and talents wholly to the cause of piety and  
 virtue. He employed a great part of his time in  
 prayer and in reading the scriptures, and found  
 the greatest comfort and delight in these devout  
 exercises. He used to say that “ the scrip-  
 “ tures are not so much adapted to the head  
 “ as to the heart of man ; that they are intel-  
 “ ligible only to those who have their hearts  
 “ right, and that to others they are obscure  
 “ and uninteresting.” In the following lines  
 which were found among his papers after his  
 decease we see a striking picture of the mind  
 of this great man. “ I respect poverty be-  
 “ cause Jesus Christ respected it ; I re-  
 “ spect riches because they furnish the means  
 “ of relieving the distressed. I do not re-  
 “ turn evil to those who have done me an  
 “ injury. I endeavour to be sincere and  
 “ faithful to all men. Whether I am alone  
 “ or in company I consider myself as in  
 “ the sight of God, who will judge my ac-  
 “ tions and to whom I consecrate them all.  
 “ These are my sentiments ; and I daily  
 “ bless my redeemer who has imposed them  
 “ upon me, and who by the operation of his  
 “ grace has taken away the concupiscence,  
 “ pride, ambition and misery to which I was  
 “ naturally subject ! I owe my deliverance to  
 “ his power and goodness ; having nothing of  
 “ myself but imbecillity and corruption.”  
 During his last illness his deportment was  
 truly edifying ; and his expressions of charity  
 and pious resignation tho’ deeply affecting

were



were highly consolatory to his friends. To his sister who attended him he said, "How has it happened that I have never done any thing for the poor, though I have always had a great love for them?" She observed, he had not possessed property sufficient to afford them much assistance. "Then," said he, "I ought to have given them my time and labour. In this respect I am to blame; and if my physicians speak truly and God should permit me to recover, I am resolved that the service of the poor shall be the sole employment of my remaining days." To some of his friends who lamented his continued afflictions he said, "I know the dangers of health and the advantages of sickness. When we are ill we are exempt from many of the passions which disturb us in health; we are without ambition, without avarice, in constant expectation of death. We have nothing to do but to submit humbly and peacefully." One of his particular friends who spent an hour with him during his illness thus expressed himself to his sister. "You may indeed be comforted. If God should call him hence you must have abundant cause to praise that gracious being for the favours which he has conferred on him. I always very much admired his great qualities: but I never before observed that extraordinary simplicity which I have just now witnessed: it is wonderful in such a mind as he possesses. I most cordially wish I was in his situation!" His last words were, may God never forsake me! and he died full of peace and hope. Robert Boyle who was illustrious by his birth and abilities, by his learning and

virtues

virtues condemned the philosophy of Aristotle and Des Cartes which dealt too much in fancy and conjecture regardless of facts. He made many useful experiments in natural philosophy, and always aimed at two points in his writings namely truth and the good of mankind. The celebrated Dr. Boerhave passed the following eulogium upon him.

“ Boyle was the ornament of his age and  
 “ country. Which of his writings shall I  
 “ commend? All of them. To him we owe  
 “ the secrets of fire, air, water, animals, ve-  
 “ getables, fossils: From his works may be  
 “ deduced the whole system of natural know-  
 “ ledge.” Having entertained doubts about  
 the truth of Christianity he examined its  
 evidences, and appropriated a large annual  
 sum for defending it against its opponents.  
 His distinguished learning and unblemished  
 reputation induced lord Clarendon to solicit  
 him to assume the sacerdotal function; which  
 he refused for various reasons one of which  
 was that whatever he wrote on religion would  
 have greater weight as coming from a layman.  
 He knew the irreligious fortified themselves  
 against all the clergy could offer, by saying  
 it was their trade and they were paid for it.  
 The great object of his philosophical pursuits  
 was to promote the cause of religion, to  
 discountenance Atheism and to raise in him-  
 self and others more exalted sentiments of the  
 greatness and glory, the wisdom and goodness  
 of God. “ He had,” says his intimate  
 friend bishop Burnet, “ the most profound  
 “ veneration for the great God of heaven and  
 “ earth that I ever observed in any man. The  
 “ very name of God was never mentioned  
 “ by him without a pause and observable stop  
 “ in

Locke,  
1675.

" in his discourse. I might challenge the  
 " whole tribe of libertines to come and view  
 " the usefulness as well as excellence of Chris-  
 " tianity in a life that was entirely dedicated  
 " to it." Locke the celebrated English philo-  
 " sopher was employed as secretary to the  
 English ambassador in Germany, and at home  
 as a commissioner of trade and plantations.  
 And yet notwithstanding his public employ-  
 ments he found leisure to write a great deal  
 for the good of mankind. He exposed the  
 scholastic philosophy which kept the learned  
 world engaged in perpetual contention, ana-  
 lysed the human mind, traced civil govern-  
 ment to its true source and maintained the  
 reasonableness of religious toleration. Truth  
 was his only object; and his treatises on those  
 subjects contain perhaps more real wisdom and  
 good sense than all the writings of the deists  
 conjointly. He has been complimented as the  
 glory of the last age and the instructor of the  
 present, and thus praised by Dr. Sydenham the  
 celebrated physician. " If we consider his  
 " genius and his penetrating and exact judg-  
 " ment or the strictness of his morals, he has  
 " scarcely any superior and few equals now  
 " living." He wrote on the reasonableness of  
 Christianity, and advised a friend to study the  
 Scriptures, especially the New Testament. " It  
 " has," says he, " God for its author, salva-  
 " tion for its end and truth without any mix-  
 " ture of error for its matter." " For four-  
 " teen or fifteen years he applied himself in an  
 " especial manner to the study of the Scrip-  
 " tures, and employed the last years of his life  
 " hardly in any thing else. He was never  
 " weary of admiring the great views of that  
 " sacred book and the just relation of all its  
 " parts;

“ parts: he every day made discoveries in it  
 “ that gave him fresh cause of admiration.”

“ A short time before his decease he received  
 “ the sacrament at home with two of his friends  
 “ and said, he was in the sentiments of perfect  
 “ charity towards all men, and of a sincere  
 “ union with the church of Christ by what-  
 “ ever name distinguished.” Sir Isaac New-

Newton,  
 1700.

ton possessed a vigorous, subtle and penetrating mind; and his works prove he merited the title of prince of philosophers. Fontenelle says of him that in learning mathematics he did not study Euclid: he understood him almost before he read him: a cast of his eye on the contents of the theorems seemed to be sufficient to make him master of them. He twice represented the city of Cambridge in parliament and was highly favoured by queen Anne and George 1st. Several of his works mark a profundity of thought that astonished the most learned; and a famous mathematician on the continent thus expressed himself to an Englishman who visited him. “ Does Mr. “ Newton eat or drink or sleep like other “ men? I represent him to myself as a celestial being entirely disengaged from matter.” However his learned researches did not divert him from religion: there was no book he studied with more attention than the bible; nor was there ever any man better qualified than this prince of philosophers to examine its evidences. But instead of exposing the bible he declared he found more internal marks of authenticity in it than in any profane author. The ingenious Halley having once thrown out some reflections on Christianity in the presence of Sir Isaac; this great man stopped him short by the following words. “ Dr.

“ Halley

“ Halley, I am always glad to hear you when  
 “ you speak about astronomy or other parts of  
 “ mathematics, because that is a subject you  
 “ have studied and well understand: but you  
 “ should not talk of Christianity, for you have  
 “ not studied it nor do you know any thing  
 “ of the matter” (*b*). This reprimand would  
 be well deserved by other men of abilities and  
 knowledge who asperse Christianity; tho’ they  
 never had leisure, nor opportunity, nor per-  
 haps inclination to examine its evidences. This  
 eminent philosopher was pious, mild; a lover  
 of peace and free from vanity. His discove-  
 ries concerning the frame and system of the  
 universe were applied by him to demonstrate  
 the being, power and wisdom of God: and  
 he wrote a treatise to prove that the prophecy  
 of Daniel’s weeks was fulfilled in Christ. The  
 amiable quality of modesty stands conspicuous  
 in the character of this great man’s mind and  
 manners. He never spoke of himself in such  
 a manner as to give the most malicious cen-  
 surers the least occasion even to suspect him  
 of vanity. He was candid and affable, did  
 not assume any airs of superiority over his as-  
 sociates, nor think his merit or his reputation  
 sufficient to excuse him from any of the com-  
 mon offices of social life. Tho’ attached to  
 the church of England he condemned the per-  
 secution of the non-conformists, judged of  
 men by their conduct, and the true schismatics  
 in his opinion were the vicious and the wicked.  
 The disorder of which he died was supposed  
 to be the stone in the bladder, which was at  
 times attended with such severe paroxysms as  
 to occasion large drops of sweat to run down

(*b*) Biograph: Brit: life of Emlin near the end.

his face: in which trying cases he never was heard to utter the least complaint nor to express the least impatience. Herman Boerhave, Boerhave,  
1710. a Dutchman was distinguished for learning, for medical skill, for piety and Christian endowments. At his first setting out in life he taught mathematics to obtain a necessary support; but his abilities and character spread his fame throughout the world, and enabled him not only to be bountiful but to leave at his death above two hundred thousand pounds sterling. The knowledge and learning of this great man however uncommon held in his character but the second place; his virtue was more uncommon than his literary attainments. He was an admirable example of piety, humility, temperance and other virtues. He asserted on all occasions the divine authority of the Scriptures; the excellence of Christianity was the frequent subject of his conversation. As soon as he rose in the morning it was his practice to retire for an hour to private prayer and meditation; which, as he often told his friends, gave him spirit and vigour in the business of the day. Religion was the basis of all his virtues and the principle of his whole conduct. He was too sensible of his own weakness to ascribe any thing to himself, or to conceive he could subdue passion or withstand temptation by his own natural power: he attributed every good thought and every laudable action to the goodness of God. Being once asked by a friend who had often admired his patience under great provocations, whether he had ever been under the influence of anger or by what means he entirely suppressed that impetuous and ungovernable passion? He answered that he was naturally quick of resentment; but

E e

that

that he had by daily prayer and meditation at length attained a mastery over himself. He never thought it necessary to confute calumny and detraction; "they are sparks," said he, "which if you do not blow will go out of themselves. The surest remedy against scandal is to live it down by perseverance in well doing, and by praying to God that he would cure the distempered minds of those who traduce and injure us." A diligent imitation of the example of our Saviour he often declared to be the foundation of true tranquillity. He was liberal to the distressed but without ostentation. He often obliged his friends in such a manner that they knew not unless by accident to whom they were indebted. He was particularly attentive in his profession and used to say, that the life of a patient if trifled with or neglected would one day be required at the hand of the physician. He called the poor his best patients; for God, said he, is their paymaster. In conversation he was cheerful and instructive, promoted every end of social intercourse and bore an afflictive and lingering illness with constancy and firmness. What is most striking in his character was that far from being made impious by philosophy, proud by his wealth, vain by his knowledge or by virtue, he ascribed his abilities to the bounty and all his goodness to the grace of God. May his example, says Dr. Johnson his biographer, extend its influence to his admirers and followers! May those who study his writings imitate his life and those who endeavour after his knowledge aspire likewise to his piety! Mr. Addison wrote elegantly in Latin and English, in prose and verse; and his morals were

were as pure as his stile was elegant. On his return from Italy he was appointed one of the Lords Commissioners for trade; in 1709 was made secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and in 1717 advanced to the high office of secretary of state. He possessed a considerable knowledge of men and books, and happily employed this knowledge on the side of religion and virtue. His writings have been of great use to the world, and his Evidences of Christianity not the least so. Dr. Johnson thus describes his character as a writer. "He employed wit on the side of religion and virtue. He not only made the proper use of wit himself, but taught it to others: and from his time it has been generally subservient to the cause of virtue and truth. He has dissipated the prejudice that long connected cheerfulness with vice and easiness of manners with laxity of principles. He has restored virtue to its dignity and taught innocence not to be ashamed. This is an elevation of literary character above all the Greek, above all Roman fame. As a teacher of wisdom he may be confidently followed. His religion has nothing in it enthusiastic or superstitious; he appears neither weakly credulous, nor wantonly sceptical: his morality is neither dangerously lax nor impracticably rigid." The following lines of Addison expresses the pleasure he enjoyed in contemplating his future existence. "The prospect of a future state is the secret comfort and refreshment of my soul. It is that which makes nature look cheerful about me, doubles all my pleasures and supports me under all my afflictions. I can look at disappointments and misfortunes,

E c. 2

pain,



"pain, sickness and death itself with indifference; so long as I keep in view the pleasures of eternity and the state of being in which there will be no fears nor apprehensions, pains nor sorrows." Nor was this mere talk. Immediately before his death he sent for Lord Warwick a youth nearly related to him and finely accomplished, but irregular in principle and conduct; on whom his pious instructions and example had not the desired effect. The youth approached his bed and after a decent and proper pause said, "Dear Sir! you sent for me: I believe and hope you have some commands: I shall hold them most dear." Addison grasping the youth's hand said softly *see in what peace a Christian can die!* he spoke with difficulty and soon expired.

Maclaurin,  
1720.

Colin Maclaurin a Scotchman was one of the most profound as well as most ingenious man that ever lived in any age or nation. Having accidentally met with Euclid's Elements at the age of 12 he in a few days became master of the first six books without any assistance; at the age of 16 he invented many propositions of his *Geometria Organica*; was appointed a professor of mathematics in Aberdeen at 19; and soon became a favourite with Newton, Clarke and other illustrious philosophers. In all his mathematical studies he aimed at being useful, and often employed his deep, subtle and inventive powers for the benefit of mankind; in constructing or perfecting machines for improving manufactures, working mines, conveying water, gauging vessels &c. &c. His philosophical knowledge he employed in demonstrating the being and attributes of God against materialists and metaphysicians: nor was he less strenuous in defending revealed religion when-

whenever it was attacked in writing or conversation. Surely a Voltaire, a Rousseau or a Gibbon were as inferior to him in mental powers as they were in bodily strength to Hercules or Sampson! However, acute parts and extensive learning were in Maclaurin but inferior qualities; he was still more nobly distinguished from the bulk of mankind by the qualities of his heart and by his zeal to propagate truth, religion and virtue among mankind. He was pious without affectation, possessed universal benevolence and an uncommon warmth and constancy in friendship. We may judge of his faith in revelation from the support it afforded him in his last hours; in that distressful state in which every man must at last find himself, and which only minds armed with virtue and christian hope can bear with dignity. During a tedious and painful illness his behaviour was such as became a philosopher and a Christian; calm, cheerful and resigned: his senses and judgment remaining in full vigour till within a few hours of his death. Lord Lyttleton attained considerable eminence as a writer both in prose and verse; and was superior to most writers in integrity and soundness of understanding. His small tract on the conversion of St. Paul does honour to his understanding as well as to the cause of Christianity: the unbeliever has never been able to fabricate a specious answer to it. His father, having read it, wrote his son the following letter. " I  
 " have read your religious treatise with infinite  
 " pleasure and satisfaction. The stile is fine  
 " and clear, the arguments close, cogent and  
 " irresistible. May the king of kings whose  
 " glorious cause you have so well defended re-  
 " ward your pious labours, and grant that I  
 " may

Lyttleton,  
1745.

" may be found worthy thro' the merits of  
 " Jesus Christ to be an eye witness of that  
 " happiness which I do not doubt he will  
 " bountifully bestow upon you. In the mean  
 " time I shall never cease glorifying God for  
 " having endowed you with such useful talents  
 " and given me so good a son." Lord Lyttle-  
 ton thus expressed himself to the physician  
 who attended him shortly before his death.  
 " When I first set out in the world I had friends  
 " who endeavoured to shake my belief in the  
 " Christian religion. I saw difficulties which  
 " staggered me: but I kept my mind open  
 " to conviction. The evidences and doctrines  
 " of Christianity studied with attention made  
 " me a most firm and persuaded believer of  
 " the Christian religion. I have made it the  
 " rule of my life and it is the ground of my  
 " future hopes. I have erred and sinned; but  
 " have repented and never indulged any vi-  
 " cious habit. In politics and public life I  
 " have made public good the rule of my con-  
 " duct; I never gave councils which I did not  
 " at the time think the best. I have seen that  
 " I was sometimes in the wrong; but I did  
 " not err designedly. I have endeavoured in  
 " private life to do all the good in my power,  
 " and never for a moment could indulge ma-  
 " licious or unjust designs upon any person what-  
 " ever." On the evening of his death when  
 Lord and Lady Valentia came to visit him, he  
 gave them his solemn benediction and said, *be*  
*good, be virtuous, my Lord; you must come to this.*

It reliev-  
 ed prison-  
 ers (e).

Our Saviour's words, *I was in prison and ye*  
*came unto me* point out the duty of visiting

(e) This section should be inserted at p. 152.

and

and relieving the wretched inhabitants of prisons. This duty never was performed with so much zeal and success as by the late Mr. Howard who spent the greater part of his life in visiting all the prisons and hospitals of Europe; to render them salubrious and to meliorate the condition and morals of the prisoners and patients. He was attached to religion and aspired to its rewards. A little before the last time of his leaving England when a friend expressed his concern at parting from him lest they should never meet again, he cheerfully replied, we shall soon meet in heaven: and as he rather expected to die of the plague in Egypt he added, the way to heaven from Grand Cairo is as near as from London. He said he was perfectly easy at the event and made use of the words of Father Paul who, when his physicians told him he had not long to live, said, *It is well, whatever pleases God pleases me.* Of his character and pious labours Dr. Aiken speaks in the following terms. "Among those truly  
 " illustrious persons who in the several ages  
 " and nations of the world have marked their  
 " track thro' life by a continued course of  
 " doing good, few have been so distinguished  
 " either by the extent of the good produced,  
 " or the purity of motive and energy of character exhibited in the process of doing it  
 " as the late John Howard. To have  
 " adopted the cause of the prisoner, the sick  
 " and the destitute not only in his own country, but throughout Europe;—to have  
 " considerably alleviated the burthen of present misery among those unfortunate classes,  
 " and at the same time to have provided for  
 " the reformation of the vicious, and the pre-  
 " vention

"vention of future crimes and calamities;—  
 "to have been instrumental in the actual es-  
 "tablishment of many plans of humanity and  
 "utility, and to have laid the foundation for  
 "much more improvement hereafter;—  
 "and to have done all this as a private un-  
 "aided individual, struggling with toils, dan-  
 "gers and difficulties which might have ap-  
 "palled the most resolute, is surely a range  
 "of beneficence which scarcely ever before  
 "came within the compass of one man's  
 "exertions." "I cannot name this gentle-  
 "man," says Edmund Burke, "without re-  
 "marking that his labours and writings have  
 "done much to open the eyes and hearts of  
 "of mankind. He visited all Europe,  
 "not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces  
 "or the stateliness of temples; not to make  
 "accurate measurements of the remains of an-  
 "cient grandeur; nor to form a scale of the  
 "curiosity of modern art; nor to collect me-  
 "dals or collate manuscripts:—but to dive  
 "into the depths of dungeons; to plunge  
 "into the infection of hospitals; to survey  
 "the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take  
 "gauge and dimensions of misery, depression  
 "and contempt; to remember the forgotten;  
 "to attend the neglected, to visit the forsa-  
 "ken and compare and collate the distress of  
 "all men in all countries. His plan is origi-  
 "nal: it is full of genius as it is of humani-  
 "ty. It was a voyage of discovery; a cir-  
 "cumnavigation of charity. Already the be-  
 "nefit of his labours is felt more or less in  
 "every country: I hope he will anticipate his  
 "final reward by seeing all its effects fully  
 "realized in his own".

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